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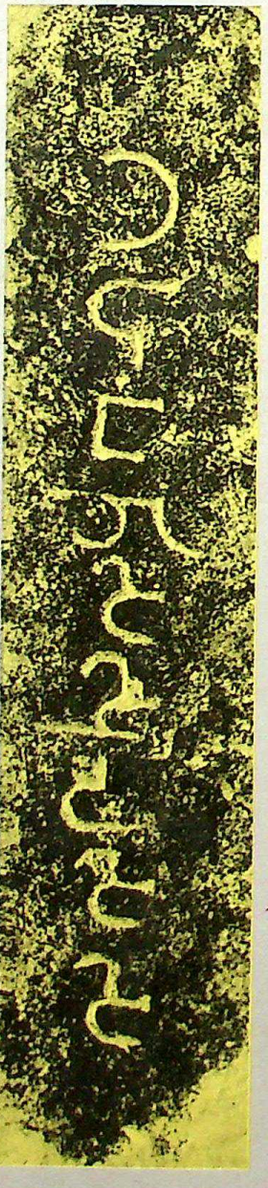
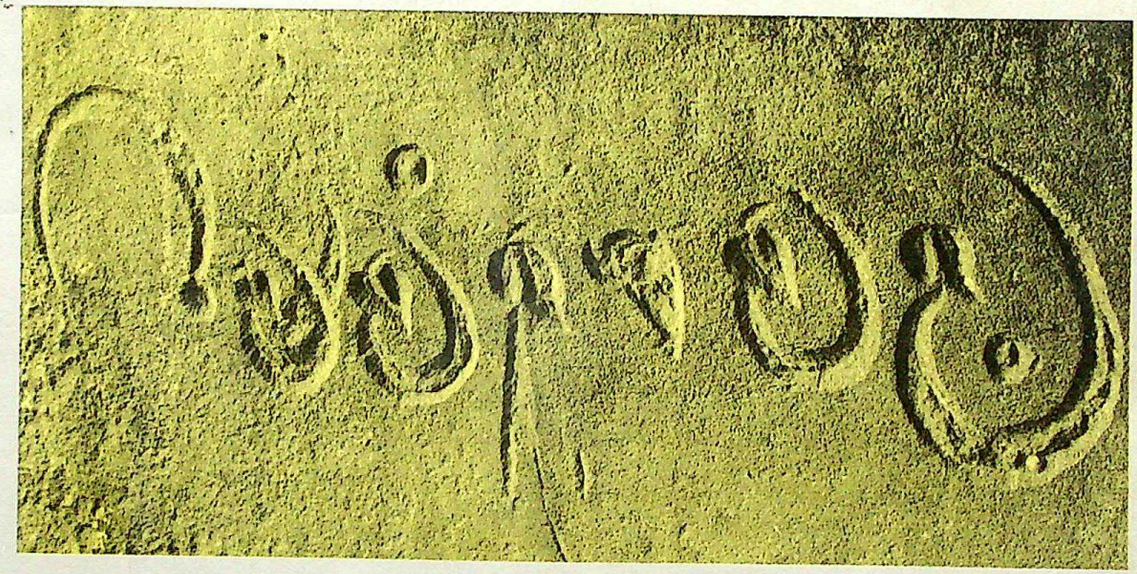
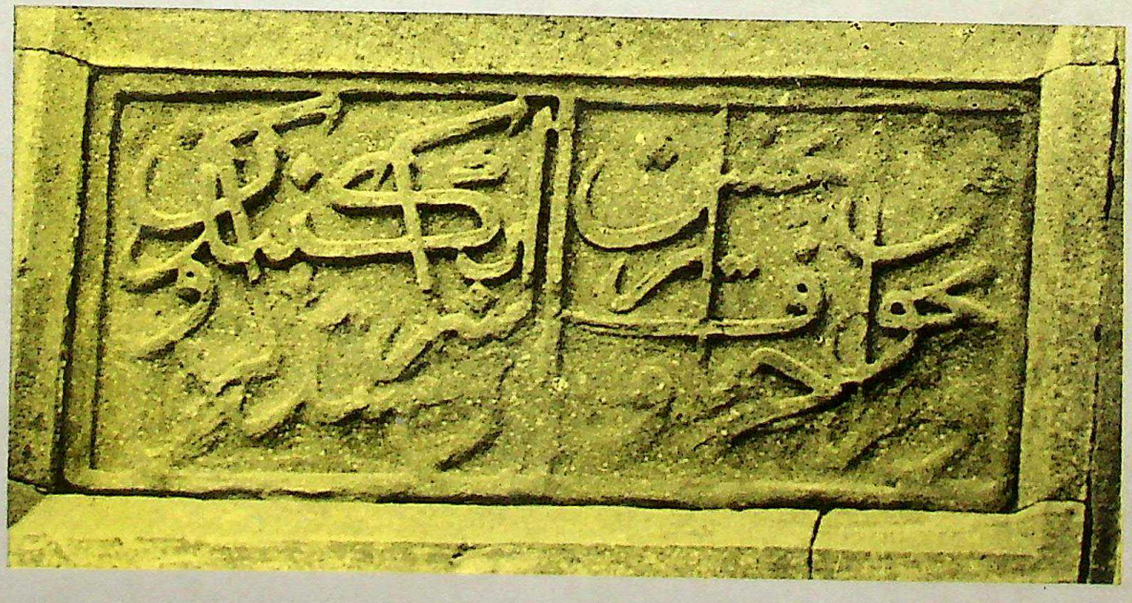
Indian Epigraphy

Its Bearing on the History of Art







Edited by **Frederick M Asher** and **G S Gai**

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INDIAN EPIGRAPHY

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Indian Epigraphy

Its Bearing on the History of Art

Edited by

FREDERICK M. ASHER
G.S. GAI

OXFORD & IBH PUBLISHING CO.
New Delhi Bombay Calcutta

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INDIAN STUDIES

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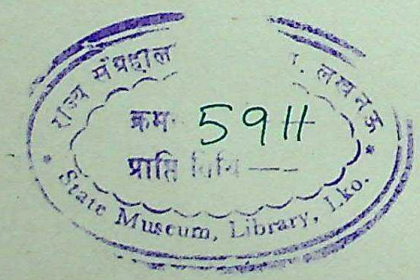
Dedicated to
Pradeep R. Mehendiratta
and
V.R. Nambiar



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Preface

ALMOST ANY scholar would readily acknowledge that research is not confined by strict disciplinary limits, that the work of one field draws on many for its conclusions and, in turn, has implications for others. Yet professional life tends to be confined by the discipline. Art historians, for example, generally publish in journals specifically devoted to the subject and attend professional meetings where they discuss problems with other art historians. Similarly, epigraphers customarily work in a sort of professional isolation. Needless to say, however, the material studied by epigraphers has direct bearing on the study of art history, while, perhaps less well recognized, the works of art themselves, if properly interpreted, can serve as documents that illuminate the study of epigraphy. Thus to focus on problems of common interest to art historians and epigraphers, a Symposium—Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art—was held in December, 1979 at the American Institute of Indian Studies Center for Art and Archaeology, Varanasi. The papers in this volume largely evolve from that meeting.

The division of parts in this volume is sufficiently informal that titles of these parts have been eliminated. Roughly, however, the first part includes papers on the earliest material, that is, from the time of Aśoka to the ascent of the Guptas and their contemporaries. A significant number of these papers pertain to sites of the Deccan and the Krishna River Delta, where controversial material has become better understood from inscriptions associated with it. Monuments dating to the time of the Guptas' contemporaries and immediate successors are covered in the second part. Notably only one paper covers monuments dated to the time of the imperial Guptas, perhaps indicating that Gupta inscriptions have been sufficiently thoroughly studied to leave few problems that can be resolved with epigraphic evidence. Groups of papers focus on the Śītaleśvarī Mahādeva temple at Candrāvatī and the Muṇḍeśvarī temple, the only known north Indian temples dated by inscription to the seventh century, and the elusive temple whose construction is recorded in the Mahākūta inscription of 602 A.D. The third and fourth parts are essentially parallel to one another, both covering monuments of the period often but unsatisfactorily called medieval. Like European medieval art, the so-called medieval art of India includes a great many styles and some of the richest developments, especially in architecture, ever produced in the subcontinent. For the first time, there is substantial information on the creators of the monuments, not just the idealized abstractions that texts provide but specific information, including the names of artists and their relationships with one another; eventually, then, it might be possible to treat the corpus of a certain artist as is done now for Mughal painting. So, too, with the proliferation of temples, many more inscriptions associated with them are known; hence, the stylistic evolution of temples can be plotted with greater precision than ever before, the development of a single temple complex (including various reconstructions and modifications) can be determined, and the components of temples can be identified with proper nomenclature. The third part treats monuments of this period in north India; the fourth part treats south Indian monuments. To a greater extent than often realized, that division is artificial, for the developments are fre-

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quently parallel (although specific forms may differ), and skillful artists were aware of styles that transcended the great north-south divide to say nothing of the more restricted regional limitations. Islamic art is treated in the final part, the only one distinguished by the faith of its patrons and users. This part also represents a sort of chronological division, for following the temple building activity that flourished through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, much of India's monumental architecture is Islamic. It is not exclusively Islamic, for Hindu palaces and temples continue to be constructed—leading to difficult questions of what, if anything, is meant by the term Islamic style. All the papers in this part concern architecture. To a greater extent and on a different level than papers in the previous parts, they address questions of symbolism, of the very meaning of the monuments themselves. Perhaps because Muslims were people of the book, of the written word rather than *śruti* literature, they maintained records, sometimes in the form of epigraphs, that permit a kind of interpretation not yet possible for earlier periods.

Besides the authors, the scholars whose papers are included in this book, a great many others contributed to the success of the Symposium and the production of this volume. At the head of the list, but always insisting that he remain in the background, is M.A. Dhaky. The organization of the Symposium was largely his effort, and his scholarly insights are reflected in many of the papers published here. Every one of his colleagues at the American Institute of Indian Studies Center for Art and Archaeology, Varanasi, also helped shape this volume. We would have to provide a comprehensive register of the Center's staff, from administrators to chowkidars, if all those who in some way contributed to the production of this volume were to be acknowledged individually. M.N. Deshpande, the distinguished former Director-General of Archaeology in India, was co-convener of the Symposium and a spirit behind the production of this volume. The Smithsonian Institution, through the American Institute of Indian Studies, sponsored the Symposium and provided a generous subvention grant that made the publication of this volume possible. Francine Berkowitz and Betty Wingfield, of the Smithsonian Institution Office of Fellowships and Grants, deserve special acknowledgement for considerable help and ultimately for insuring that the project reached fruition. We were fortunate that Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. undertook the publication of this volume and had the privilege of working with a staff that was at once congenial and thoroughly professional. Mohan Primlani, General Manager, Indu Ramchandani, the editor, and A.P. Gopalakrishnan, in charge of production, were among several there who transformed the manuscript to a finished book.

The editors and all the contributors to this volume feel a particular indebtedness to two persons whose tireless efforts have made possible scholarship in many fields—not just the production of this volume. Pradeep R. Mehendiratta, Director of the American Institute of Indian Studies, and V.R. Nambiar, Associate Director (Administration) of the Institute's Varanasi Center, most simply stated, facilitate scholarship for hundreds every year. Their work is never acknowledged with a by-line on an article or book, yet it stands behind scores of publications. Thus the editors, expressing the sentiments of all the authors, hope that the dedication of this volume to Pradeep Mehendiratta and V.R. Nambiar will, in some small measure, provide recognition for their extraordinary effort on behalf of scholars in India and America, indeed the world over.

F.M. Asher
G.S. Gai

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in the papers and the notes:

A.R.I.E.	*Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*
A.S.I.	*Archaeological Survey of India (Cunningham Series)*
A.S.I.A.R.	*Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report*
C.I.I.	*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*
E.I.	*Epigraphia Indica*
I.A.	*The Indian Antiquary*
I.H.Q.	*Indian Historical Quarterly*
J.A.S.B.	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*
J.B.R.S.	*Journal of the Bihar Research Society*
O.H.R.J.	*Orissa Historical Research Journal*
S.I.I.	*South Indian Inscriptions*

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1

Calligraphy in Pre-Islamic India

RICHARD SALOMON

INTRODUCTION

CLASSICAL INDIAN culture is not generally thought of as having an outstanding calligraphic tradition; one tends rather to think of such cultural regions as the Islamic world, East Asia, or medieval Europe in this connection. Indeed, there seems to be a rather widespread belief that before the coming of Islam India had no art of calligraphy whatsoever. But, while it must be admitted that calligraphy did not have the cultural importance in ancient India that it did, for instance in Iran or China, it is absolutely wrong to state that India did not know calligraphy at all. The purpose of this paper is to point out a few of the best examples of calligraphic writing in Indic inscriptions,[1] and thereby to trace the development of Indic calligraphy and isolate its characteristic features and functions.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CALLIGRAPHIC INDIAN SCRIPTS

Standard Calligraphic Scripts

Early Indic inscriptions—i.e., the Aśokan inscriptions and most others of the third to first centuries B.C.—are distinguished, if anything, by their lack of calligraphic qualities; if there were any calligraphic scripts used in this period, none has survived. It is not until the first century A.D. that epigraphic scripts first exhibit an incipient tendency toward calligraphic ornamentation. Thus such inscriptions as Mathurā nos. 18 and 118,[2] and the Nāsik cave inscriptions (especially no. 10, *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. 8, plate after p. 90) have, in addition to their stylishly neat hands, a decorative downward prolongation of certain letters, such as the consonants *k*, *ñ*, and *r*, and the subscript vowels *u* and *ū*.

This decorative elongation of selected characters continues to develop and becomes the main characteristic of the early calligraphic scripts. The next phase appears in the inscriptions of the cave temples of western India, at such sites as Kuda, Junnar, and Karle. At this stage, upward vertical elongations of the consonant *l* and the diacritic vowels *i* and *ī* are added to the above-mentioned downward flourishes; the prolongations also become longer, often equal in height to the characters themselves.

This style is further developed in the inscriptions of the time of the Ikṣvāku kings of the Āndhra country in the third century A.D. at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Amarāvatī, Jaggayyapeṭa and other sites. Here the flourishes are much longer, often two to three times the height of the character, and sometimes even four or five times (Plate 1).

Thus the highest development of the calligraphic scripts of the early period occurs in the south; but in the following phase, which might be labelled the classical period of Indic calligraphy, the major innovations are from northern India. These are the development of various forms of the ornate *Siddhamātṛkā* (also called *Kuṭila*, *Vikaṭa*, or acute-angled) script, which is the transitional phase between the ancient Brāhmī script[3] and the modern north Indian scripts derived from it.

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Somewhat surprisingly, the fourth and fifth centuries, which were the high point of the Gupta renaissance and the accompanying artistic flowering, produced just a few good specimens of calligraphy. One exception is the Bilsad pillar inscription of Kumāragupta (415/16 A.D.; *CII*, Vol. 3, Plate v), with its neatly squared letters and moderate vowel flourishes. The ornate calligraphy of the proper *Siddhamātṛkā* script first made its appearance in the later Gupta era of the sixth century, the best early specimen being the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharmā and Viṣṇuvardhana, dated 533/34 A.D. (Plate 2). This early *Siddhamātṛkā* is distinguished overall by the strikingly angular forms of the letters, and in detail by the arrow-shaped flourishes used to mark the superscript vowels *e*, *ai*, *o*, and *au* (e.g. line 2, characters 8 and 9). Other decorative features are the leftward elongation of subscript *y* (line 7, character 4), and the sporadic doubling of diacritic *i* (line 1, character 27).

Another outstanding specimen of calligraphic *Siddhamātṛkā* of the sixth century is the Jaunpur inscription of the Maukhari king Īśānavarmā (*CII*, Vol. 3, Plate xxxii-a). This style is distinguished by its extremely ornate treatment of diacritic *i* (lines 3, 8, and 9).

The following century represents the climax of the calligraphic development of the *Siddhamātṛkā* script. Outstanding seventh-century calligraphic inscriptions include the Bānskherā copper plate of the emperor Harṣa (*EI*, Vol. 4, plate after p. 210); the Jhālrāpāṭan inscription (690 A.D.; *IA*, Vol. 5, p. 180); the Samoli inscription (646 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 20, plate facing p. 99); the Benares plate of Pantha (*c.* 700 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 9, plate after p. 60); and the Udaypur inscription (Plate 3). Notable features of the last epigraph are the decorative treatment of the arrow-shaped vowels *mātrās* (e.g. line 4, character 10) and of diacritic *i* (line 3, character 7); and the introduction of post-consonantal *au* in the form of a triple arrow (line 4, character 41).

Ornate *Siddhamātṛkā* continued to be used in north India during the two following centuries in such inscriptions as Indragaḍh (710/11 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 32, plate after p. 116); Kaṇaswā (738 A.D.; *IA*, Vol. 19, plate facing p. 54); and Kāritalāi (841 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 23, plate facing p. 260). An important new feature of the first two inscriptions is the introduction of exaggerated decorations of the top vowel *mātrās* of the first line, giving the effect of a decorative border to the inscription as a whole. This technique, as shown in this paper, was to become very prominent later on in south Indian calligraphy.

Besides the usual forms of calligraphic *Siddhamātṛkā* described above, there was also an even more developed hyperornate variation of the script, which seems to have been used primarily for signatures. A famous example of this hyperornate *Siddhamātṛkā* is the signature of Harṣa on the above-mentioned Bānskherā plate, written in large bold strokes, with the vowel diacritics treated in extreme ornate fashion, each diacritic consisting of up to 12 or more separate strokes. An even more ornate example of this style is the signature of *Śrīpūrṇṇāditya* [*sic*] on a pillar in the Rājīvalocana temple at Rājim (Plate 4). Here the flourishes are no longer merely abstract, but are developed into floral and animal motifs, this too became a characteristic feature of later south Indian calligraphy.

From the ninth century on, calligraphy underwent a general decline in the north, and there were few notable decorative styles after 1000 A.D. Meanwhile, however, some interesting developments took place in the south. Beginning in the fourth century A.D., the very widespread "box-headed" form of Brāhmī made its appearance in the Deccan, spreading in the subsequent centuries throughout south and central India and remaining in use in some areas until the eighth century. This script is characterized by the square or rectangular head (whence the name) on each character, and by the squared off forms and predominant right angles of most of the letters. There is very little of the ornamental flourishing characteristic of most Indic calligraphy, the artistic effect being achieved by the unusual shape of the letters themselves.

While other calligraphic inscriptions occur in the early medieval south—most notably a highly ornate Pallava inscription in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñcī[4]—these are mostly imitations of the contemporary northern styles. It was in the tenth century, however, that new and original calligraphic forms began to develop in the south; and it is probably not mere coincidence that this is the period when northern calligraphy began its decline. An early specimen of the new southern style is the Kādalūr copper-plate grant (962 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 36, plates after pp. 100, 104, 108), with its long flourishes extending downward from letters of the last line of each plate and covering the lower margin.

In the twelfth century, the calligraphic style seen in its embryonic shape in Kādalūr grant attained its mature form in such specimens as the Śravaṇa-

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Belgoḷa inscription of Malliseṇa (after 1129 A.D.; Plate 5), the Kurgod inscription (1181/2 A.D.; *EI*, Vol. 15, plate after p. 272), and the Madagihal inscription (late 12th century; *EI*, Vol. 15, plate after p. 322). These inscriptions are characterized by an extreme degree of ornamentation of the top line and, to a somewhat lesser degree, of the last line. Thus the top line of the Śravaṇa-Belgoḷa inscription is decorated with a complex mixture of floral motifs and knotted vines, bird and animal figures, and abstract patterns, which are actually extensions of two subscript *r*s in the first and fourth characters of the line.

After the twelfth century, fine calligraphic inscriptions disappeared abruptly in the south, much as they did a few centuries before in the north. These dates suggest that the advent of Islam in India must have been the main cause of the decline of the indigenous calligraphic tradition. Around 1000 A.D. in the north, and in the following centuries in the south, as Islamic rule spread over India, the great Islamic calligraphic tradition seemed to have overshadowed the native Indic traditions.

Special Calligraphic Scripts

The scripts described above are all, to a greater or lesser degree, calligraphic variants of the normal scripts of the times and therefore can be called "standard" calligraphic scripts. There are, on the other hand, two other highly calligraphic epigraphic scripts which, though almost certainly ultimately related to the standard scripts, are so highly developed that they cannot be satisfactorily read simply by comparison to them; indeed, both of these "special" calligraphic scripts still remain to be fully deciphered.

The first special script is what I have proposed[5] to call Ornate Brāhmī. This term, along with the term "Ornamental Brāhmī," has in the past been rather loosely used to apply to a variety of calligraphic scripts, including some of those described in this paper under the heading of standard calligraphic scripts. I have suggested, however, that the name "Ornate Brāhmī" be reserved for the peculiar script used in numerous short inscriptions at such diverse sites as Sītābhiñji (Orissa),[6] Salihuṇḍam (Andhra Pradesh), Devaprāyag (Uttar Pradesh), Udayagiri (Madhya Pradesh), Kheri (Bhagalpur District, Bihar), and Akhnur (Jammu and Kashmir; Plate 6). This script is characterized by a squat, squarish shape of the letters, and by obtrusive ornate flourishes above and below them. Unlike the hyper-ornate standard scripts already described, it is extremely difficult to recognize the phonetic values of the characters of this script. It has been generally presumed, however, and probably correctly, that the inscriptions are signatures or "pilgrims records."

The second "special" script is the well-known but mysterious "shell-script" or *Śaṅkhalipi*. This script, found at a great many sites in India and Indonesia,[7] occurs in similar circumstances, and frequently in direct conjunction with ornate Brāhmī. The characters of the shell script have a variety of rounded and oblong shapes (some of which seem to resemble a conch shell, whence the name of the script), and are decorated with flourishes which, in some specimens, are extravagantly ornate (Plates 7 and 8). The shell script was current in and around the fourth to seventh or eighth centuries A.D., and seems to have been used, like Ornate Brāhmī, primarily for signatures (as is suggested by, among other factors, the uniform brevity of inscriptions in both scripts). In its extreme degree of ornamentation and elaboration, the shell script can be considered as the ultimate development of the calligraphic art in India.

CONCLUSIONS ON THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF INDIC CALLIGRAPHY

The most typical characteristic of Indic calligraphic scripts in general is the extension of the vowel markers, and sometimes of subscript consonants, into ornamental flourishes of varying types ranging from moderate in the earlier styles to extremely ornate in the late southern and the "special" scripts. This characteristic can be seen as the natural outcome of the graphic system common to all Indic scripts, in which post-consonantal vowels are added on to the preceding consonants in the form of diacritic marks, thus providing a natural basis for the development of ornamentation.

A second characteristic of some of the Indic calligraphic scripts, notably the box-headed script and the "special scripts," is the alteration, radical in the case of the latter scripts, of the basic shapes of the main consonantal characters.

Unlike some other calligraphic traditions, such as that of the Islamic world, which developed at least partly in religious contexts, Indic calligraphy was primarily a secular art. The most developed calligraphic scripts are mostly used for signatures (as in the case of hyper-ornate Brāhmī, notably Harṣa's signature on the Bānskherā plate, and the special scripts) and for royal eulogies (*praśastis*). There is

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little evidence that ornate scripts were ever widely used in India for writing holy scriptures.[8]

This secular orientation of calligraphy is not surprising in a culture where (as opposed to the Islamic and Judaeo-Christian traditions) it is the spoken, and not the written, word which is sacred. It is only natural that a culture which viewed a written scripture more as an indication of the user's inadequate knowledge than as an object of veneration, should not have developed as extensive a tradition of fine writing as did the "people of the book." Rather, given the generally low status of the written word in traditional India, it is remarkable that the art of calligraphy did sporadically achieve a high level of artistry and originality. These achievements have not generally received their due recognition, and it is hoped that this brief description[9] will stimulate interest in and further study of this rewarding material.

NOTES

1. Out of necessity, this study is based exclusively on epigraphic scripts, since virtually no other written documents survive from the earlier period. Had such documents been available, we would no doubt have had a much clearer and more detailed view of Indian calligraphy. The surviving materials probably give us only a partial idea of the full development of this art.

2. Heinrich Lüders, *Mathurā Inscriptions*, ed. Klaus L. Janert, Gottingen, 1961.

3. All the ornamental scripts described in this paper are forms of Brāhmī or its descendants and derivatives. The other major early Indic script, Kharoṣṭhī, never developed any significant calligraphic varieties.

4. *See* C. Sivaramamurti, *Indian Epigraphy and South Indian Scripts* (Madras, Government Museum 1952), p. 36. Sivaramamurti's discussion of calligraphic scripts (pp. 32–38) is the best available to date.

5. Part 2 of "Undeciphered Scripts of South Asia," in forthcoming S.K. Saraswati Commemoration Volume.

6. T.N. Ramachandran, "Inscriptions from Sītābhiñji, Keonjhar District," *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society,* Vol. 19 (1948–9), pp. 191–202.

7. See my "Preliminary Report on the Shell Inscriptions," Part I, *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. 11 (1977–8), supplement, pp. 1–32; Part II, forthcoming.

8. It has been pointed out to me, however, by Professor B.N. Mukherjee and others, that this statement is strictly correct only in reference to the Brahmanical or Hindu tradition. In later Buddhism in India and surrounding regions, the manuscripts of sacred texts did themselves become objects of veneration, and (particularly in Nepal) were sometimes written in ornamental scripts.

9. This paper is intended to be the basis of a more detailed study of Indian calligraphy, which I hope to publish in the near future.

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2

Bearing of Numismatics on Early Indian Art History in the Background of Epigraphy

PARMESHWARI LAL GUPTA

THE PAUCITY of material severely limits the knowledge of early Indian art. But both inscriptions and numismatics, inscribed coins, fill many gaps. No less than a thousand symbols and motifs on silver punch-marked coins are known; their rendering is very close in technique to line-drawing, incised configuration and relief sculpture. With the help of these symbols on the punch-marked coins, the development of pictorial art may be pushed back at least to the sixth century B.C., if not earlier.[1] Further, knowledge of early iconography and sculpture may be supplemented from some of the representations on the punch-marked coins and the devices seen on the succeeding cast and die-struck coins. Likewise, information on the early architecture can be widened from those coins.

A case in point is the *śilā-vigaḍa-bhīcā* mentioned in Aśoka's Rummindeī pillar inscription; it is neither further described nor known from extant examples. Unfortunately, epigraphers have so far failed to grasp the meaning of the phrase, and it has passed unnoticed by art historians as well. Charpentier and Hultzsch have taken the phrase as *śilā-vigaḍabhī cā* and interpreted it as "a stone bearing a horse", suggesting thereby that Aśoka meant to convey that he had placed a figure of horse over the capital of the column,[2] an interpretation probably influenced by Yuan Chwang's reference that this column had a horse-capital. But they ignored the fact that none of Aśoka's pillar inscriptions refer to the capital at the summit; here there is no occasion for Aśoka to deviate from his practice.

Epigraphers, who have more recently edited Aśokan inscriptions, however, have rightly rejected this interpretation, properly reading the phrase as *Śilā-vigaḍa bhīcā*, but not properly interpreting it. D.C. Sircar, for example, has rendered this phrase in Sanskrit as *Śilā-vikṛta bhittikā* and has glossed it as *prastara khacitaḥ iṣṭaka-prākārāḥ* (i.e. a brick-wall interwoven with stone).[3] But nothing in the phrase indicates that the wall was made of *iṣṭaka* (bricks). Sircar's Sanskrit rendering of the phrase and his translation of it are untenable. According to him, *bhīcā* may be *bhittikā*. But *bhīcā* more likely is the same as what is called *bhīṭā* in the dialects of Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, meaning "high walls" and "high mounds". Further, I am unaware of any rule of philology of which the Prakṛt *vigaḍa* could be rendered *vikṛta* in Sanskrit. Even if it could be, I wonder how the word *vikṛta* could mean *khacita*. No such meaning for *vikṛta* is provided in any Sanskrit dictionary or lexicon. Moreover, *vikṛta* carries a bad sense; it means "disfigured" or "distorted". *Vikṛta*, then, is not the likely meaning of *vigaḍa;* rather *vigaḍa* simply is *vikaṭa*, meaning "dense" or "massive". The phrase, therefore, means "a massive high wall of stone" and indicates that Aśoka had the sacred place enclosed by a substantial stone wall. The phrase therefore shows that in his days, sacred sites sometimes had surrounding walls.

This interpretation may be further supported by

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the famous Ghosuṇḍī inscription in Rajasthan of a little later date. It refers to the construction of a *pūjā-śilā-prākāra* for the venerable Samkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva.[4] The phrase *pūjā-śilā-prākāra* may be interpreted in two ways. In one it would be *pūjā-śilāyāḥ prākāraḥ*, i.e. wall-enclosure around the adoration-stone. If this interpretation is accepted, it would mean that a stone-slab symbolised Saṁkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva. But no such representation of Saṁkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva is known. Therefore, in all probability, the phrase should be interpreted as of *pūjāyāḥ śilā-prākāraḥ*, i.e. "a stone-wall around the object of worship." And this is almost synonymous with the Mauryan expression *Śilā-vigaḍa-bhīcā* (*śilā-vikaṭa bhitti*) of the Rummindeī column.

These expressions recall the tree-in-railing symbols, on silver punch-marked coins in various forms (Figure 1a–k), which can be clearly recognized as the *rūkha-cetiya (vṛkṣa-caitya)*. To understand the visual form of this structure, it is necessary to examine the coins of the kingdom of Pañcāla that are found in large number at Rāmnagar, identified with the ancient Ahicchatrā and its surroundings. They uniformly have three small symbols and the name of the issuer on one side and a device on the other side.[5] These devices illustrate the aforesaid expressions, and they also present iconographic representations and ancient architectural forms.

The reverse devices on these coins represent Brahmanical deities whose names are the part of the proper names of the kings who issued the coins. For instance, the coins of Yajñapāla show on their reverse a kindled sacrificial altar[6] signifying Yajña (Figure 2). Similarly, the coins of kings Sūryamitra[7] and Bhānumitra[8] have representations of the Sun in the form of a disc with rays (Figures 3 and 4).[9] The coins of Rudragupta, for instance, have a trident, the emblem of Rudra, over a post (Figure 5).[10]

Besides these and similar representations, some of the coins also have anthropomorphic representations of the deities. The coins of Agnimitra show Agni in the form of a frontally standing male figure with flaming hair (Figure 6).[11] There is a similar figure on another coin; on it a male figure holds in his right hand a snake that passes against the lower half of his body (Figure 7),[12] an iconic form of Bhūmi,[13] appropriate to king Bhūmimitra. On the coins of Viṣṇumitra, the frontal standing man holds a disc (*cakra*) in his left hand and a club or mace (*gadā*) in his right hand (Figure 8),[14] indicating that the figure represents Viṣnu. These coins show that the reverse devices on the Pañcāla coins portrayed a part of the names of the kings inscribed on the obverse. They also present very early iconic forms of Brahmanical deities.

In light of these examples, it may be inferred that the other issues of the Pañcāla series also represent deities in their reverse devices consonant with the names of their issuers. But on most of these coins, there is no apparent sign to identify a particular deity. On them the figures are shown simply standing with their right arm upraised and left one akimbo[15] in the same manner as we find in the stone sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa and earlier periods; there they are identified as Yakṣas or the Bodhisattvas, according to their body build. In these sculptures, one cannot distinguish any specific divinity, Brahmanical or otherwise, since the figures are not shown with any identifying attribute or mount (*vāhana*) or any other indication such as inscribed legends revealing the name (Figures 9 and 11).[16] These coins, then, furnish evidence that this form of representation was not exclusive to the Yakṣas and the Bodhisattvas, but was recognized as a general form of representation of some divinity in the early period.

Most of the divinities or their symbolic representations on the Pañcāla coins are seen standing over a sort of low platform (*kuṭṭima*) surrounded by a schematic railing (*vedikā*); the two ends of the railings have upright posts with three cross-bars. Most likely, then, they signify the railings surrounding the platform and that they had two gates (*toraṇa-dvāras*), each with three horizontal bars at the top seen in profile (*cf.* Figures 2–9). These could have been similar to the *toraṇa-dvāra* (gate) depicted on a clay sealing of the early Christian era discovered at Candraketugaṛh in West Bengal, where a gate is shown with three successive curved cross-bars (Figure 10).[17] Its appearance reminds us of the *torana-dvāras* (gates) at Bhārhut (reconstructed, Indian Museum, Calcutta), Mathurā (demolished) and Sāñcī. Thus these coins provide evidence that the early sanctuaries had a platform in the centre for the divinity, and surrounding it was a square enclosure with at least two, if not four, *toraṇa-dvāras*. In the light of the notice taken in the Aśokan inscription, the tradition of enclosures to sacred sites goes back at least to Aśokan times.

On coins of the Pañcāla kings Jayagupta,[18] Indramitra[19] and Prājāpatimitra,[20] deities are shown under a domical structure placed on a high platform. The domical vault has a protuberance at the top, and eaves project at both the curvilinear ends (*cf.* Figure 11). Here is evidence of the existence of tem-

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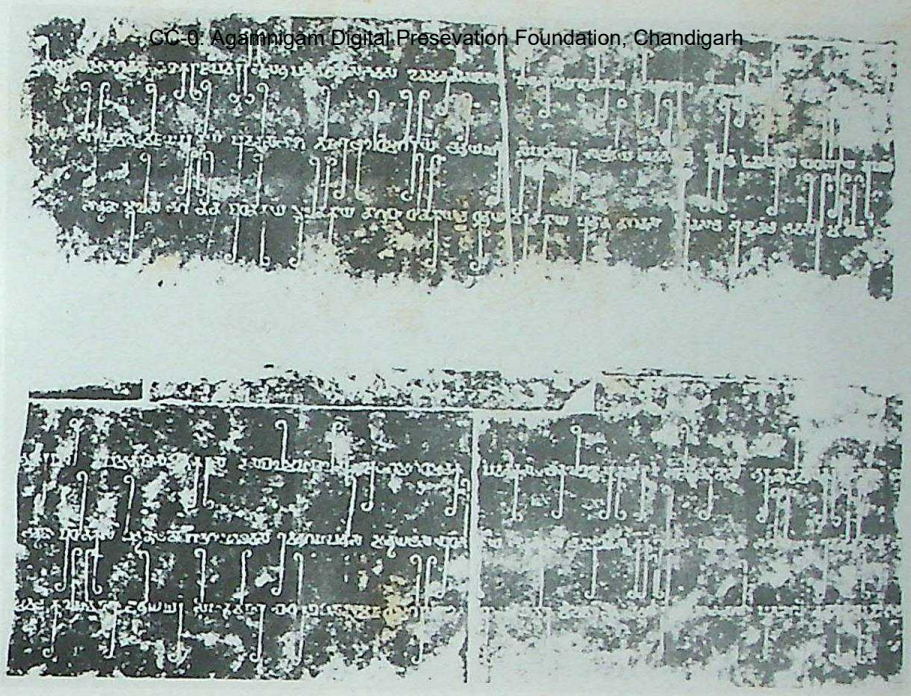
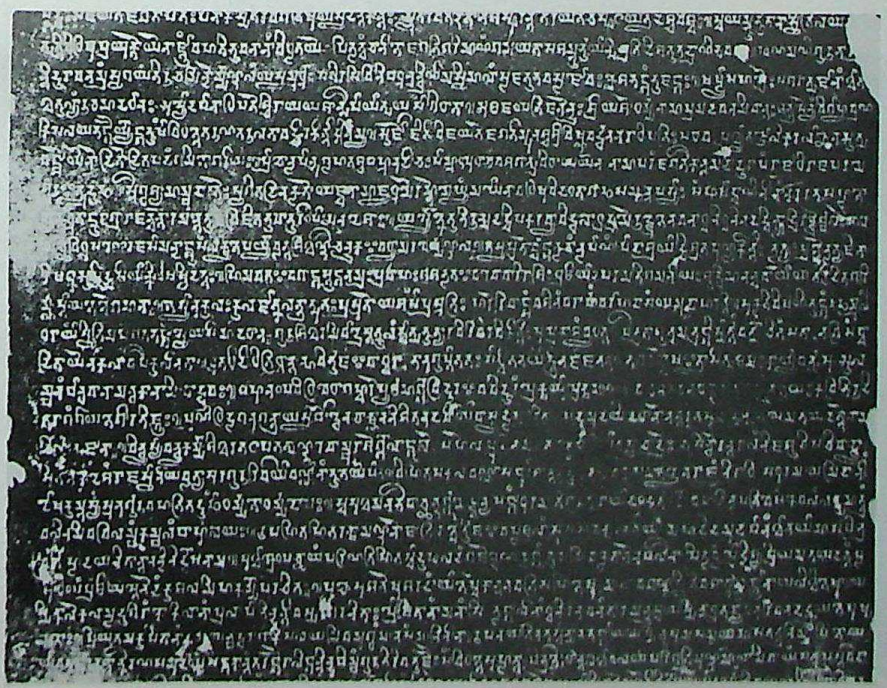


Plate 1. Nagarjunikoṇḍa Inscription F (*E.I.*, Vol. XX, Plate after p. 22). Ornate early southern style.

Plate 2. Mandasor Inscription of Yaśodharmā and Viṣṇuvardhana (*C.I.I.*, Vol. III, Plate xxii). Early ornate *Siddhamātṛkā* script.



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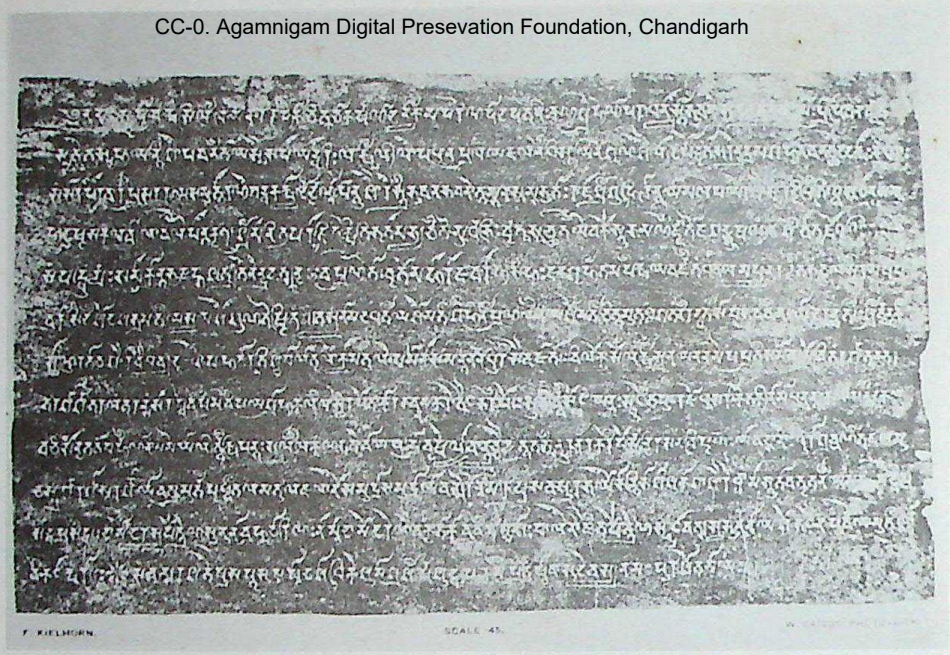

Plate 3. Udaypur (Rajasthan) inscription (*E.I.*, Vol. IV, Plate facing p. 30). Ornate *Siddhamātṛkā*.

Plate 4. Signature of *Śrīpūrṇṇāditya* (*sic*) at Rājim (Madhya Pradesh) in hyper-ornate *Siddhamātṛkā*.

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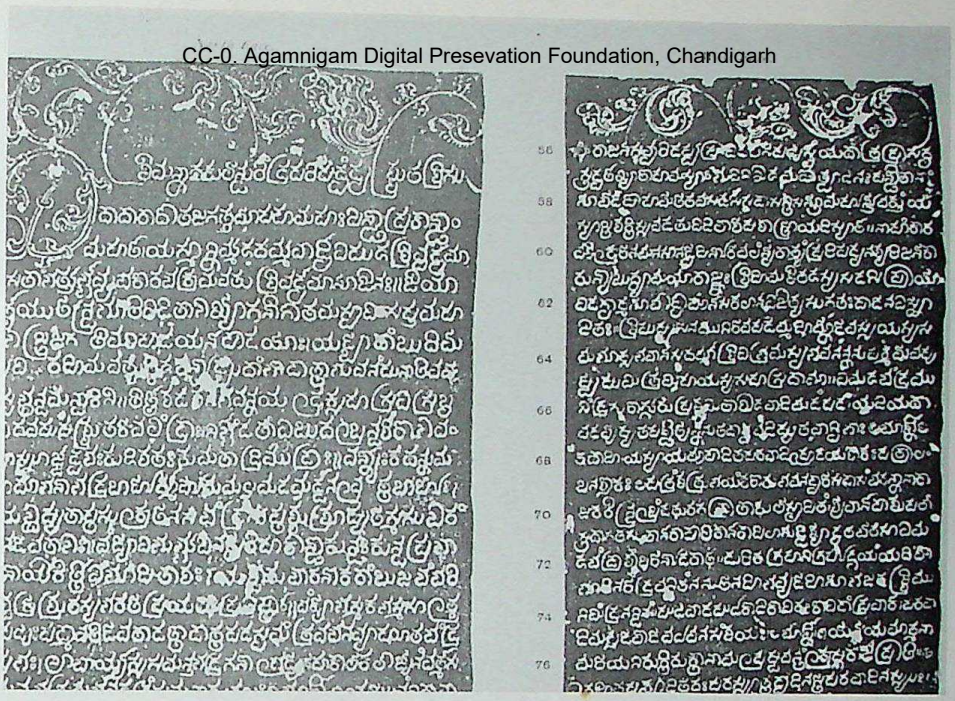

Plate 5. Detail of Śravaṇa-Belgoḷa inscription (*E.I.*, Vol. III, Plate after p. 194). Late ornate southern script.

Plate 6. Ornate Brāhmī inscriptions at Akhnur (Jammu and Kashmir). (*A.R.I.E.*, 1962–3, Plate III).

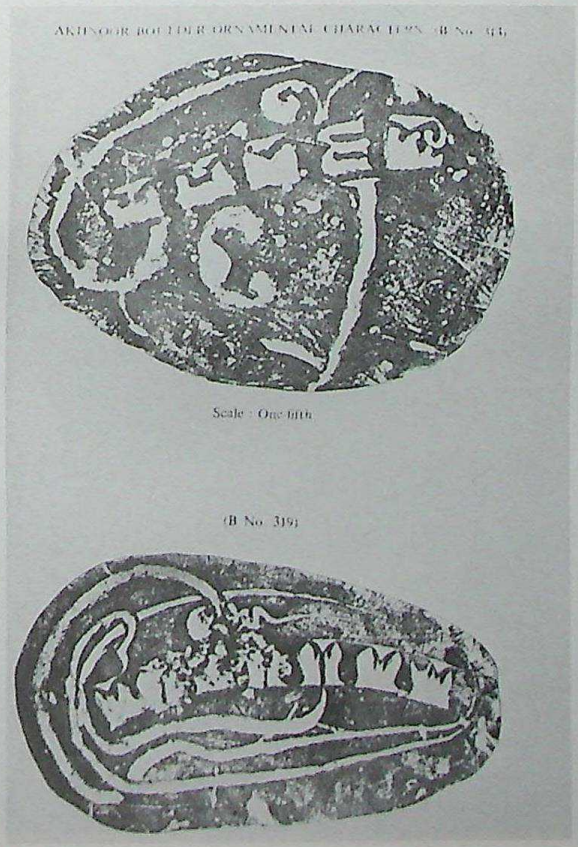

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Plate 7. Shell character inscription in the Dhyānaghar cave at Khaṇḍagiri (Orissa).
Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India.

Plate 8. Shell character inscriptions (nos. 5 and 6) on the Garuḍa pillar at Eraṅ (Madhya Pradesh).
Examples of very ornate (above) and less ornate (below) styles.

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Plate 9. Amarāvatī. General view of the excavated trenches.

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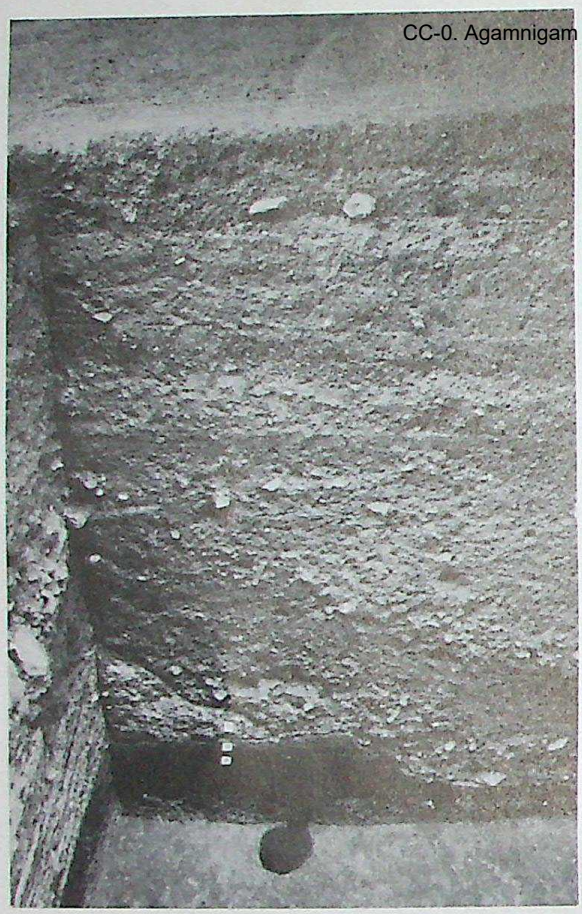

Plate 10. Amarāvatī. Post-hole in the earliest level. Period I-A, fourth century B.C.

Plate 11. Amarāvatī. Inscribed pottery. Period I-A, fourth century B.C.

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Plate 12. Amarāvatī. Fragmentary Aśokan pillar edict. Period I-B, third century B.C.

Plate 13. Amarāvatī. Granite upright foundational pit and stratigraphical position. Period I-B, third century B.C.

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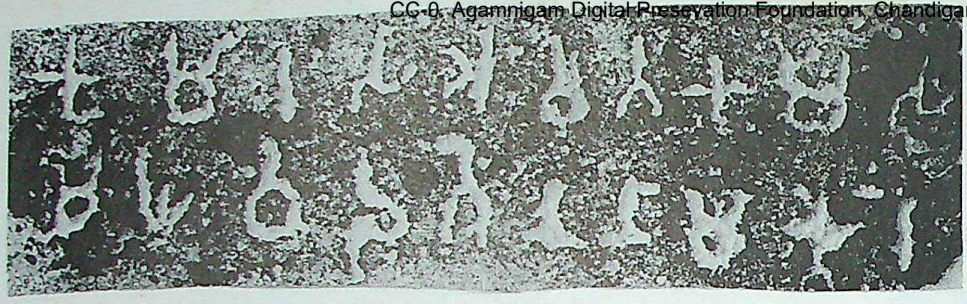

Plate 14. Amarāvatī. Inscribed granite upright.

Plate 15. Amarāvatī. Inscribed granite upright.

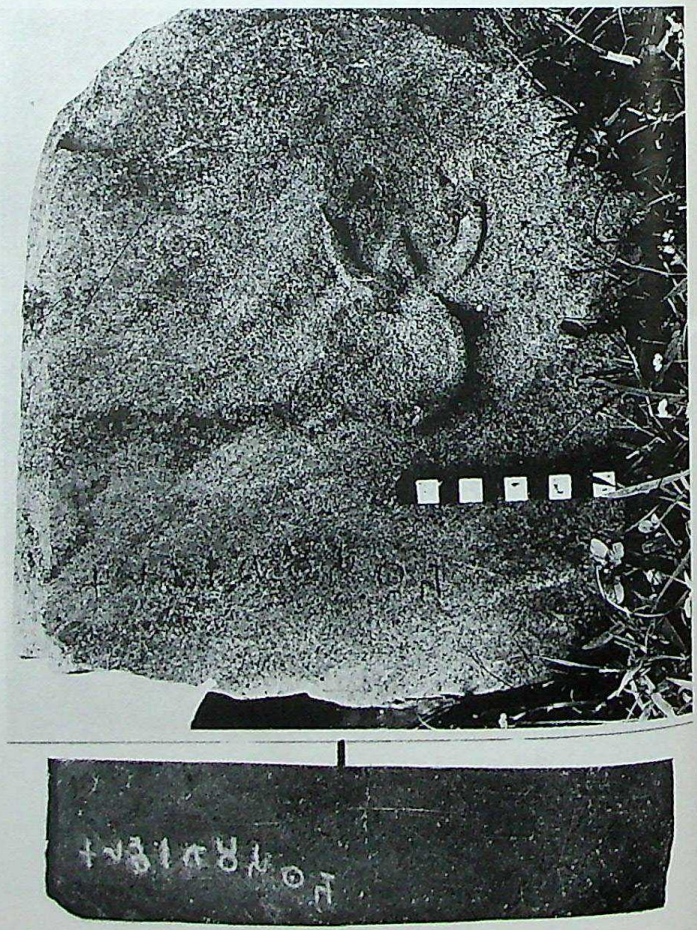

Plate 16. Amarāvatī. Inscribed granite upright.

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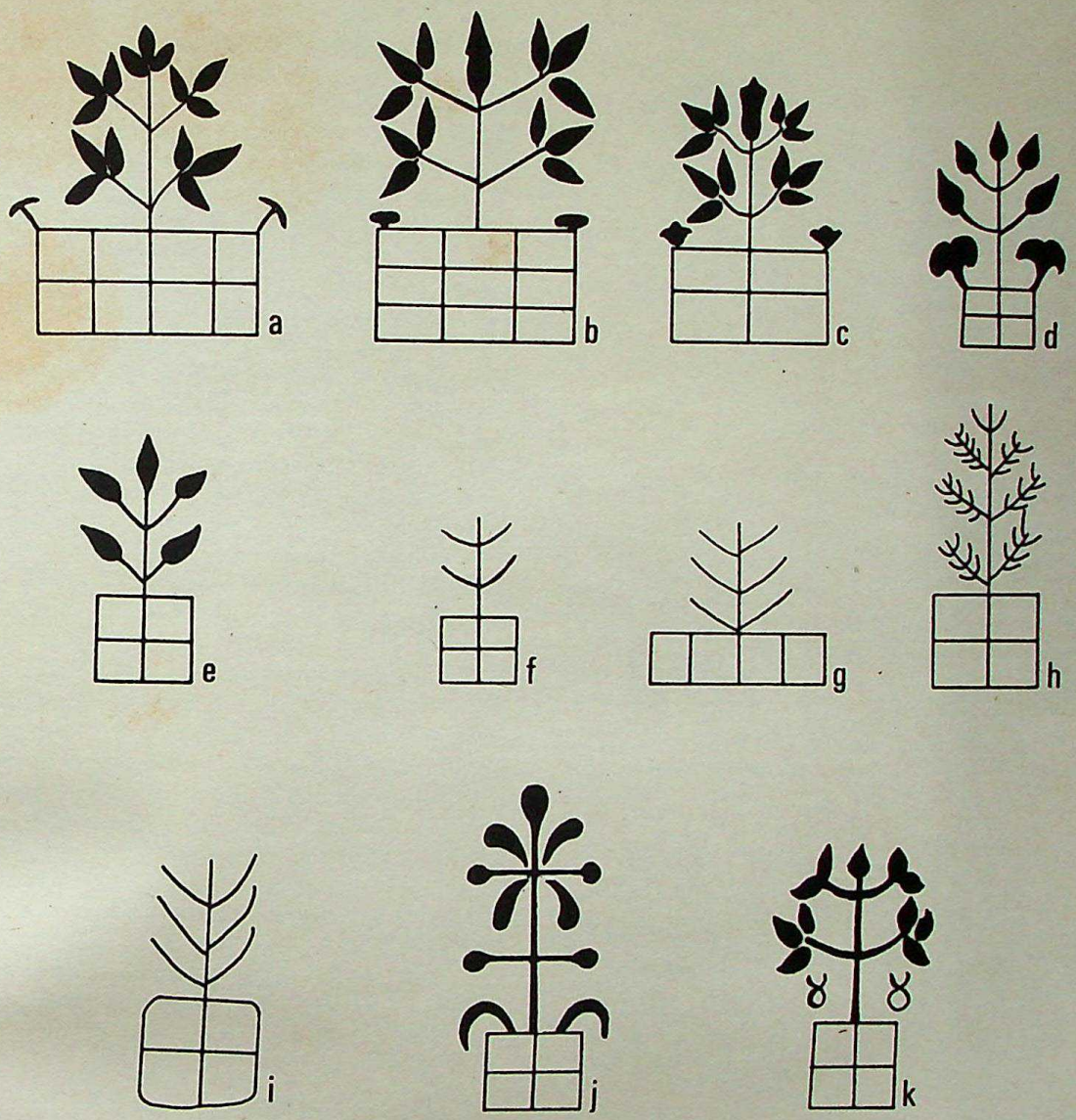

Figure 1a–k. Tree-in-railing motif on silver punch-marked coins.

ples, though primitive, approximately two centuries before the time of the Kuṣāṇas. These early temples seem quite different from those known in the early Gupta period, and in these, the origin of some of the northern Indian temple forms may be traced. The coins show that, unlike the early Gupta temples with flat roofs, the temples of the pre-Christian period had some sort of vaulted roof with perhaps a sort of *āmalakī*, probably as mentioned in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* (first century B.C.–A.D.).[21] The front of the platform indicates some sort of railings; but from what is featured on the coin, one cannot ascertain whether these temples had any kind of outer enclosure.

So far as the Pañcāla coins are concerned, it appears that the railing-enclosure motif was the earlier and the domical structure motif was the later in use in the sacred architecture. Because both the forms are seen only on the coins of Indramitra[22] it may be surmised that domical structure might have come into vogue at this time. The domical-building type is not

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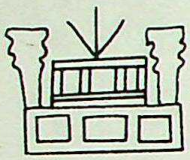

Figure 2.
Coin of Yajñapāla.

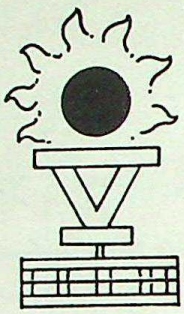

Figure 3.
Coin of Sūryamitra.

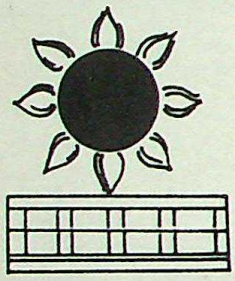

Figure 4.
Coin of Bhānumitra.

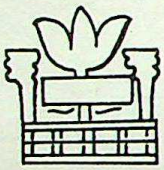

Figure 5.
Coin of Rudragupta.

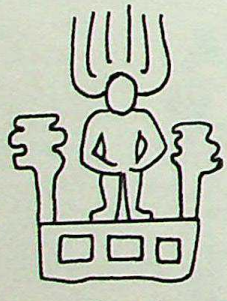

Figure 6.
Coin of Agnimitra.

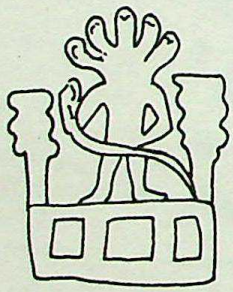

Figure 7.
Coin of Bhūmimitra.

Figure 8.
Coin of Viṣṇumitra.

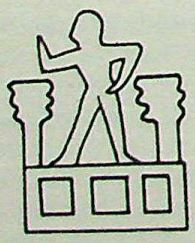

Figure 9.
Coin of Pañcāla king.

restricted to the coins of Pañcāla. For instance, the coins of Vīrasena, from Mathurā and its vicinity, show a female deity within an arched structure having three pinnacles at the top (Figure 12). Though the form is not exactly similar to that seen on the Pañcāla coins, the two may well be compared.

Domical structures erected over pillars are also seen on some coins. One such structure is depicted on a south Indian punch-marked coin found at Bodināyakanūr. Over the two pillars is a flat terrace, on which again is a pair of pillars supporting a dome with a finial (Figure 13). On another coin, listed by Allan as belonging to the Audumbaras, thóugh its issuer is uncertain,[23] four corner pillars, with one (pair of?) central pillars, support the dome. The structure appears to be surrounded by a railing (Figure 14).

A coin of Trakata (Trigarta) Janapada[24] bears a storyed pillared structure with a dome at the top and a curvilinear eave around the roof above the ground floor. The structure is surrounded by a high railing and probably also has a gate or a pillar-post in front (Figure 15). This recalls the famous Sohgaura copper plate,[25] which bears an inscription most likely referring to a three-storyed store-house (*koṭhagalani tighavani*). Above the inscription, the plate bears a row of line drawings, among which are two identical representations of a pillared structure with an ample eave over the four pillars and over this eave a small domical roof apparently supported on three pillars; its crowning members are three elongated pinnacles (Figure 16). According to some scholars, this epigraph dates before the period of the Mauryas; others take it only earlier than Asoka; Sircar dates it post-Aśokan.[26] Whatever might be its true date, it is al-

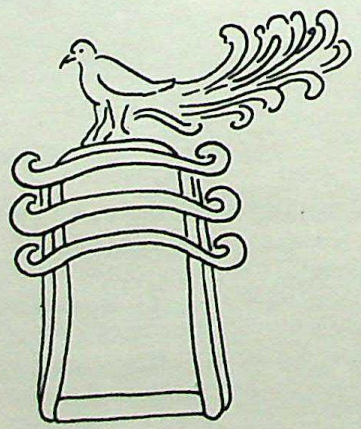

Figure 10.
Sealing from Candraketugarh.

Figure 11.
Coin of Pañcāla king.

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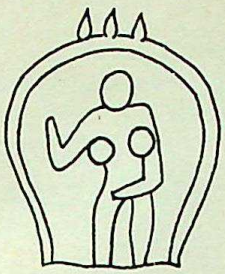

Figure 12.
Coin of Vīrasena.

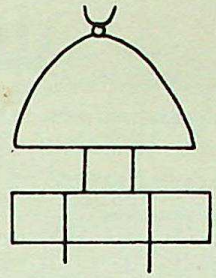

Figure 13. South Indian punch-marked coin.

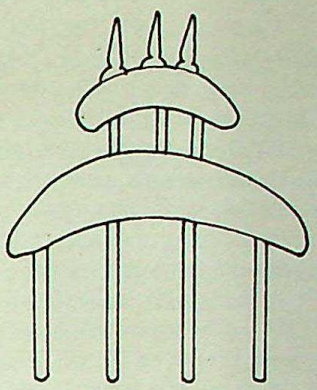

Figure 16. Drawing from Sohgaura copper plate.

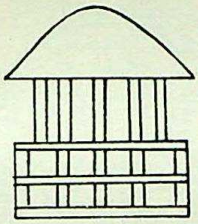

Figure 14. Coin of Audumbaras king.

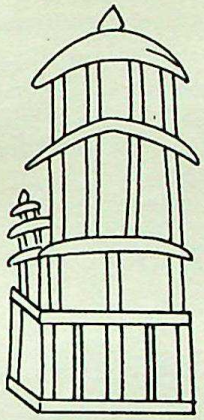

Figure 15. Coin of Trakata Janapada.

most certain that it relates to a period older than any of the coins noticed above.

A well-developed pillared structure is also seen on the coins of the Audumbaras, a tribal state near Paṭhānkoṭ.[27] K.P. Jayaswal regarded this structure as a mote-hall;[28] Allan took it as a "two-storyed domed and pillared stupa";[29] Coomaraswamy described it as "railed (circular) pavilion with four or five pillars and domed (thatched) roofs with projecting eaves and a small finial".[30] Cunningham identified it as a "pointed-roofed temple of two or three storys with pillars".[31] None of these identifications, I believe, is correct. Rather, U.P. Shah has correctly recognized that it is an elaborate square pillared-hall shown in perspective (Figure 17).[32] It has a decorated (or compartmentalized) high socle over which stand four pillars on each side, the cantoning corner pillars being common. Over the pillar-supported roof is the *hāra*-parapet which encloses another pillared story with a square *śikhara*-roof crowned by a complex finial having two components, a *ghaṭa* topped by a *kalaśa*. In this structure, rudiments of the south Indian (and, of course, of the early pan-Indian) *śikhara*-temples may be visualized. But the most important feature of this structure, previously missed by writers, is the long post with a trident at the top and an axe attached to the shaft erected in front of it. The import of the trident-pillar before the edifice can be understood from the third act of Bhāsa's play *Pratimā*. It says that on his way back to Ayodhvā. Bharata, Rāma's half brother, looked for a suitable place for resting before entering the town; at a distance he located a building that appeared like a temple. When he came close, he was surprised to see that the emblem of the presiding deity outside the building was missing.[33] Thus at that time most temples had an emblem of the cult image outside and probably in front of the main structure. This tradition finds support in the famous Besnagar pillar inscription of Heliodorus. Therein it is stated that he erected a *Garuḍadhvaja* in front of the temple of Vāsudeva.[34] By the side of the pillar upon which the inscription is incised remnants of a temple were found. In the light of this evidence, the trident-pillar with axe on the Audumbara coin may be recognized as the emblem of Śiva, so the edifice may be identified as a Śiva temple.

In *bhikṣu* Bala's inscriptions found at Sārnāth[35] and Śrāvastī,[36] of the very early years of Kaniṣka, a *chatra-yaṣṭi* (post with umbrella) over the image of a Bodhisattva is mentioned. The umbrella of the Sārnāth image survives. This Buddhist (and Jaina) practice of placing divine images under umbrellas was long thought to have originated about the early Kuṣāṇa period. But the silver *drachmae* of the Indo-Bactrian king Agathocles (155 B.C.) discovered at Ai-Khanum in the Oxus Valley[37] demonstrates that this form of a simple sanctuary was prevalent as early

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as the mid-second century B.C. On these coins, Vāsudeva (Figure 18) and Saṁkarṣaṇa (Figure 19) are shown standing beneath the umbrellas in the same way as the Bodhisattvas in the Kuṣāṇa period. Vāsudeva is shown holding a *cakra* in his left hand and a *kalaśa* in the right. Likewise, Saṁkarṣaṇa is holding his well-known *āyudhas*, the *hala* (plough) and *mūsala* (pounding-rod). These coins further corroborate the worship of these heroes mentioned in the Ghosuṇḍi[38] and Nānāghāt[39] inscriptions.

The Pañcāla coins mentioned above provide data on the early iconography of female deities. They are seen on the coins of two kings, namely Phālgunimitra[40] and Bhadraghoṣa.[41] The goddesses are shown standing on a full-blown lotus with the right hand upraised and the left hand akimbo. Since these figures are on a lotus, they should, at first glance, be identified as Lakṣmī. But following the convention of the Pañcāla coins, they must be divinities reflecting the names of the issuers. They could, then, only be the constellations Phālgunī and Bhadrā, the consorts of Kubera. Thus these coins indicate that the lotus was not at that time the exclusive attribute of Lakṣmī. This is, in a different way, also borne out by the famous Bhārhut relief of Sirimā Devatā, where the lotus is missing.

Among the names of Pañcāla rulers, none can be associated with Lakṣmī or Śrī. But it cannot be concluded from this that Lakṣmī or Śrī were not popular at the time the Pañcāla coins were issued. Indeed, the coins of Viśākhadeva of Ayodhya[42] and Azilises[43] of the Śaka series show Abhiṣeka-Lakṣmī—a standing female figure being anointed by an elephant on either side.

A new form of flat-roofed structure developed quite late, as is apparent from a Kuṣāṇa coin of Huviṣka. It shows a plain shrine with two sides of the walls that stand over a decorated plinth; over the walls is a flat roof with slanting sides. This is close to the flat-roofed structure of the Gupta period (Figure 20). Under this shrine are placed the figures of Skanda-Kumāra, Viśākha and Mahāsena.[44]

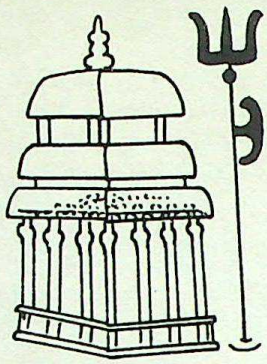

Figure 17.
Coin of Audumbaras king.

Figure 18.
Coin of Vāsudeva.

Figure 19.
Coin of Saṁkarṣaṇa.

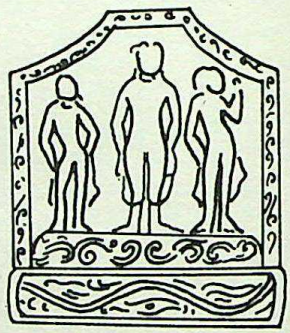

Figure 20.
Coin of Huviṣka.

Besides the examples cited above, coins—almost invariably inscribed—provide still more data bearing on the history of art. With their help, problems of both chronological and iconological significance can be resolved.

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NOTES

1. Scholars generally place the origin of the punch-marked coins earlier than the sixth century B.C., but my feeling is that they were also current in the seventh century B.C., if not in the eighth.

2. J. Charpentier, "A Note on Padaria or Rumminidei Inscription," *I.A.*, Vol. XLIII (1914), pp. 17–20.

3. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Calcutta 1965, p. 67.

4. K.P. Jayaswal, "The Ghosūṇḍī Stone Inscription," *E.I.*, Vol. XVI (1921–22), p. 27: Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, pp. 90-91.

5. J. Allan, *British Museum Catalogue of Coins, Ancient India*, London 1936, pp. 192-204.

6. A.S. Altekar, "Notes on Some New Pañchāla Coins," *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. IV (1942), pl. 1, 18. The illustration, though, is not very clear.

7. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXVII, 8–9.

8. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVII, 15, 18–20.

9. In the Coin of Sūryamitra, the sun-disc is placed over the *vaijayantī*.

10. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXVII, 2.

11. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVIII, 8–9; 13–16.

12. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVII, 4–7.

13. Bhūmi (Earth) is generally regarded as female; but here the representation is of a male figure. Allan thinks that the figure is Nāgarāja to represent Earth (*cf.* his "Introduction," p. cxviii). But I think that the conception of Earth as female divinity had not developed then.

14. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXIX, 6, 8, 9.

15. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVIII, 18; XXIX, 1.

16. For instance the image of Indra, published recently by Pratapaditya Pal, "A Kushan Indra and Some Related Sculptures," *Oriental Art*, Vol. XXV, 2 (Summer, 1979), p. 213, Fig. 1. The same is true of coins in some cases. Ambā, the presiding deity of Puṣkalāvatī, is identified on a coin from the inscribed legend: *cf.* my article, "City Goddess of Pushkalāvatī," *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XX (1958), p. 69.

17. D.K. Chakravarty, "Some Inscribed Terracotta Sealings from Chandraketugarh," *Journal of Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XXXIX (1977), Pl. IX, 1.

18. *Allan, Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXVII, 3; XXVIII, 19.

19. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIX, 3, 5; Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, Varanasi 1963, Pl. VII, 20.

20. V.S. Agrawal, "Some Notes on New Pañchāla Coins," *Journal of Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. III (1941), p. 80, Fig. 2.

21. Kielhorn, *Patanjali's Mahabhasya*, Poona 1958, Vol. III, p. 132.

22. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXIX, 2 and 3 respectively.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 125, Nos. 24–25; Pl. XV, 11–12.

24. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXIX, 10.

25. K.P. Jayaswal, "The Text of Sohgaurā Plate," *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXII (1933–34), p. 2.

26. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 82, Fig. 1.

27. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XV, 1–10.

28. K.P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Bangalore 1968, p. 154.

29. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, p. xxxiii.

30. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, reprinted., New York 1965, p. 237.

31. A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, reprint ed., Varanasi 1963, p. 68.

32. U.P. Shah, "Beginnings of the Superstructures of Indian Temple," in Pramod Chandra, ed., *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, Delhi 1975, p. 86.

33. *Kasyanu khalu daivatasya sthānaṁ bhaviṣyati Neha kincit praharaṇaṁ dhvaja va bahiścinhaṁ dṛśyante bhavatu praviṣya jnasye.*

34. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 88.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

37. A.K. Narain, "Two Hindu Divinities on the Coinage of Agathocles," *Journal of Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XXXV (1973), pp. 73 ff.

38. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 90–91.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 193.

40. Allan, *Catalogue of Coins*, Pl. XXVII, 11–14.

41. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXVIII, 1–3.

42. *Ibid.*, Pl. XVI, 14–16.

43. R.B. Whitehead, *Punjab Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I, reprinted, Varanasi 1971, p. xiii, 332.

44. J.M. Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, Berkeley, 1967, Pl. X, 195.

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3

Early Sculptures and Epigraphs from South-East India: New Evidence from Amarāvatī

I.K. SARMA

SCHOLARS HAVE generally held that the earliest south Indian art activity in historical times, particularly the production of sculptures, is post-Aśokan. Whatever the lower limit for the art activity in this region, Amarāvatī (District Guntūr) enjoys a singularly pre-eminent position by virtue of its earliest and most prolific epigraphical and sculptural wealth. But the paramount question in relation to this famous site is: When did the art activity begin? This, however, is a question which cannot be answered in isolation of its contextual facts.

The recorded history of Amarāvatī and Dharaṇikoṭa, which formed the part of ancient Dhānyakaṭaka, probably begins with Aśoka, the great Maurya emperor.[1] In the past, several archaeologists beginning as early as the days of Col. Mackenzie (1797), dug the famous *mahācaitya* and its immediate surroundings. But no thought was ever given to working out a stratigraphic sequence of the thick accumulation there. And all these digs ended merely in the collection of a large number of sculptures, inscribed objects and architectural pieces. Various scholars, however, have tried to reconstruct the different periods of art activity on grounds of style backed by inscriptional evidence. For the first time in 1973–74 a systematic excavation (Plate 9) was undertaken to correlate stratigraphically the different structural phases with the corresponding sculptural embellishments.[2] In this effort, an attempt has also been made to fit in the earlier ill-recorded collections from the site.

I have dwelt on the newly discovered inscriptions in their chronological sequence in another paper.[3] Here I propose to make a correlative study of a few important sculptures and inscribed architectural members recently obtained from the earliest occupational levels at *mahācaitya* site. I shall begin with the archaeological content of the period designated as Period I (Figure 1).

PERIOD I

(Beginning of fourth and end of third century B.C.)

Broadly coeval with the Mauryan phase, the period was sub-divided into I-A and I-B, based on the stratigraphy, associated objects and architectural remains. No structural details, however, pertaining to the basel foundation or subsequent elaboration of the *mahācaitya* could be traced.

The former is characterized by the occurrence of post-holes (Plate 10) and pits cut into the natural soil at an average depth of 5.60 meters below surface B.S. (Figure 2), suggesting small huts on wooden posts at the site. An occupational layer of nearly 60 to 90 cm thick composed of blackish-brown earth with clay and leveled gravel-floor was found throughout (Plate 9). Among the contents of this layer, most important were NBP and Black-and-Red Wares (including two inscribed sherds), iron and occasionally brick-bats.[4]

More specifically, the inscribed sherds of Red

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Slipped and Black-and-Red Wares contain the names of the monks (Plate 11): (A) ... *ṭhisa pāta*, perhaps standing for a monk whose name ending was *ṭhisa*, like Moggaliputta Ṭhissa, and (B) *Malasa, Malasya* i.e., of Mala. The palaeography betrays clear Mauryan characters.

In view of the limited area dug and the large-scale destruction of the mound earlier, it is almost impossible to visualize the nuclei of the *stūpa* of this period. But the occupational evidence obtained in the area closer to the *mahācaitya* early precludes the existence of a Buddhist settlement; hence monks coming from far off Vaiśālī, Śrāvastī and Rājagṛha perhaps stayed. The large number of NBP sherds (200 from I-A), mostly bowls frequently with copper rivets, closely recall those known from the above eastern epicenters.[5] This earlier Mauryan Buddhist phase at Dhānyakaṭaka played no small role in attracting the attention of Aśoka, who chose the place as a center for his proselytizing activity in south-east India. The very pillar over which Aśoka inscribed his edict can perhaps be taken as an hypaethral column existing earlier. If one agrees with the latest view of John Irwin,[6] such free standing columns at the holy Buddhist places, or *tīrthas*, constituted a structural pattern and served as main objects of worship, a sort of hypaethral shrine. In fact, the form of writing over this fragmentary pillar face clearly shows that the letters (Plate 12) were engraved after the pillar was erected. It may be noted that the pillar was made of local quartzite, not sandstone from the quarries of Chunar. But A. Ghosh has observed that "the pillar and the granite railing almost unmistakably point to Aśoka as the founder of the Amarāvatī stūpa"[7] and that the Aśokan pillars went side by side with the holy structures, particularly *stūpas*.[8] Even if all these observations are taken as subjective and merely sequential, not of any chronological import, the occurrence of an occupational layer preceding the granite rail (Plate 13) cannot be easily explained away.

In Period I-B dated to *c.* third century B.C., the NBP Ware of all shades continues to occur in profusion; the total yield was 190 sherds. Other major relics of activity were uprights of granite, a few plain limestone cross-bars and copings of heavy size. These granite uprights form a class by themselves and bear characteristic Mauryan polish, occasionally with short donatory label records in clear Aśokan characters:

1. *Museum Accession No. 302/218* (Plate 14)

   Line 1: Kumārasa Avatakāmasa thabhō
   Line 2: Māghavadatē nāma Kara*

2. *Museum Accession No. 556* (Plate 15)

   ... nasa maukasa Sēṭhino thabhō

This rail was partial and flanked the eastern and western gateways of the *mahāstūpa*. Some of these heavy granite uprights fell in disuse during the subsequent period, i.e. Period II, dated to the beginning of the second century B.C. at established stratigraphically (Figure 1 and Plate 13). Considering the massive nature of the granite uprights and other rail members and the outer periphery line they covered, the *stūpa* of this period appears to be of bigger dimensions. It is very likely that the Buddhist missionaries settled in the site a few decades earlier than Aśoka's advent.[9] They may have built a modest clay *stūpa*, like the earliest one at Vaiśālī dug by Altekar which was covered in the expanded *stūpa*[10] set up following the Aśokan advent.

An early spread of the Theravāda[11] doctrine into the Andhra region under Moggaliputta Ṭhissa may not be ruled out. Mahiṣamaṇḍala, which I place in the Kṛṣṇā-Guntūr region,[12] finds mention among the nine places to which missionaries were sent during this period. The *Mahāvaṁśa* (Chapter 36, p. 144) refers to Mucilindanagara, and P.S. Sastry[13] takes it to be the present Maculipaṭṭaṇam near the coast. This important ancient port town was also called "Maisoloi" by Ptolemy.[14] It may not be without significance that the episode of Nāga Mucilinda protecting the Buddha from a great storm soon after the enlightenment was a favorite theme in the Kṛṣṇā valley Buddhist art.[15] The monks from Dhānyakaṭaka moved through this "Maisola" port to south-east Asian countries and Ceylon.

EVIDENCE OF EARLY SCULPTURAL ART

The earliest remains of the *mahāstūpa* at Amarāvatī were those representing a massive outer rail, more specially its components such as granite uprights, plain lime stone[16] *sūcīs* and copings. These indicate the beginning of sculptural activity in stone in the South. This may be explained as merely a simulation of carpentry in stone, but when such architectural members reveal sculptures both in relief and round, the evidence must be pursued, even if it be very meager.

*stands for Kārāpito.

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AMARĀVATĪ 1974-75. DIST. GUNTUR. (A.P.)

SCHEMATIC SECTION MAHĀSTŪPA & OUTER STRATA.

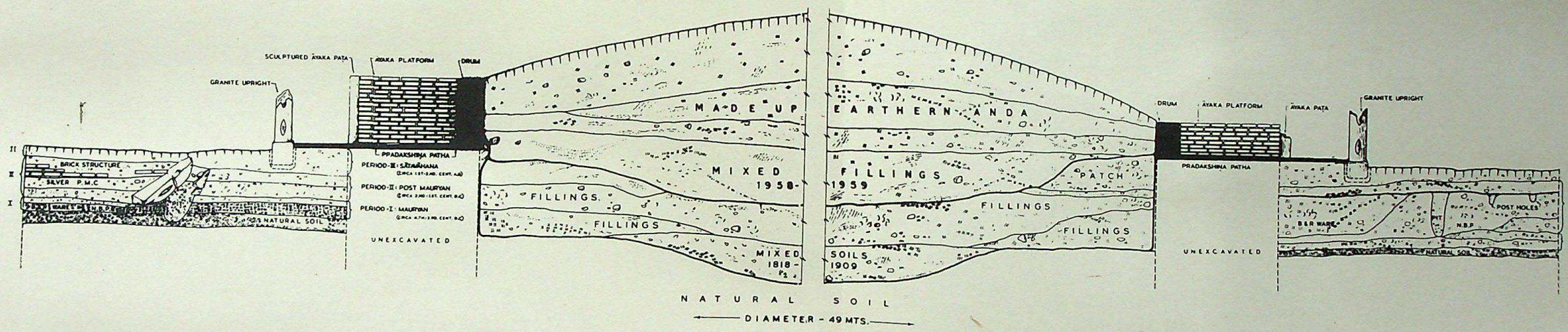

Figure 1. Amarāvatī. Mahāstūpa and other strata. Schematic section.

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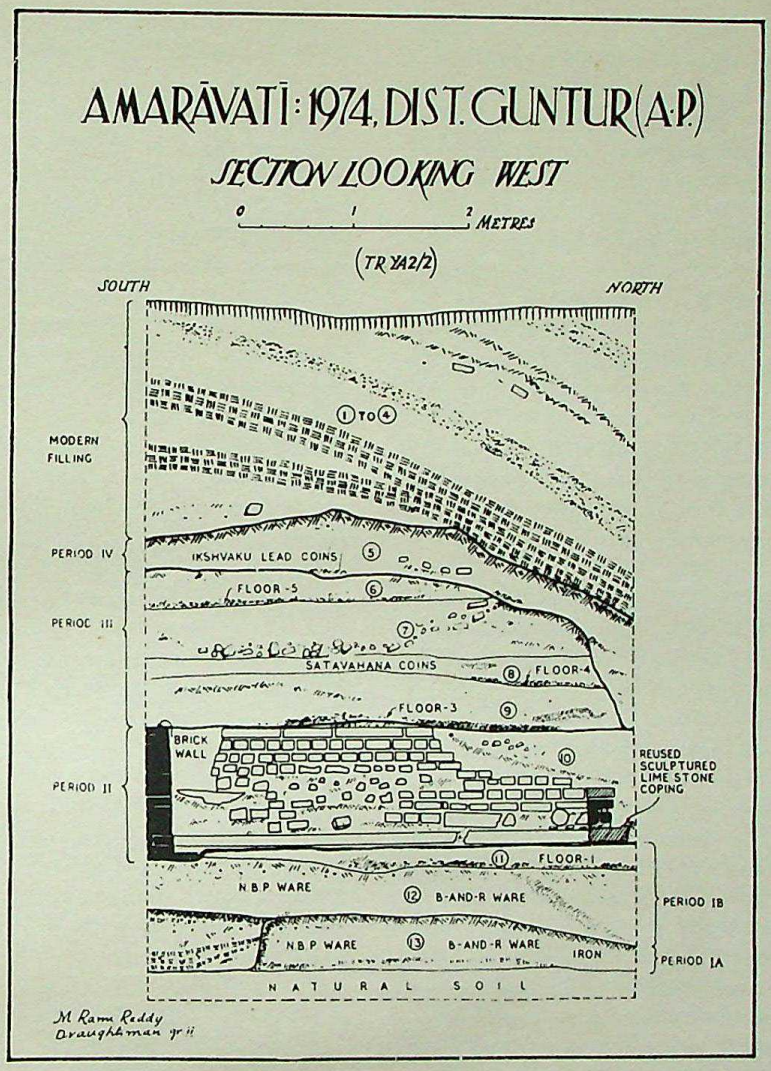

Figure 2. Amarāvatī. Trench YA 2/2, section looking west.

1. Carved Upright (Museum Accession No. 303/480)

A granite upright with *Nandipada* (the so-called *triratna*) symbol in bold relief, and the label inscription reading *Kālavaīra gāmasa thabhō* (Plate 16) in third century B.C. characters, is found at the eastern side of the *mahācaitya*. Originally these uprights with three lenticular mortises holding the tenons of the *sūcīs* (cross-bars) stood at 2.03 m height above the ground. The top of the upright is well-finished and has a tenon to fit in the mortise of the *uṣṇīṣa*, i.e., the semi-circular coping with flat underside. The broad faces of this upright as well as its sections reveal mirror-like polish, which has in recent years been flaking off in thin layers due to extremes of weather.

Following the admirable classification initiated by A. Ghosh,[17] I have attempted a rearrangement of all the railing components found at Amarāvatī, except those in the British Museum, London. The respective measurements of the tenons and corresponding mortises of both the uprights and cross-bars provided new data. The plain *sūcīs* bearing short donatory inscriptions, A. Ghosh Nos. 11, 13, 14, 16, 23, 30, 33 and Sarma's No. 74(743), belong to granite rails. The cross-bar (8/150), right extreme broken with length measuring 1.57 m, height 43 cm and thickness 13 cm, is unique inasmuch as it gives a clear idea of a

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stūpa fronted by a foliated *bodhi* tree within a square rail drawn in clearly incised lines. This *sthala-vṛkṣa* has a *lāñchana* bearing *dhvajas* (two nos.) tied to the top branches. The *stūpa* also has a similar *Ketu*-dhvaja tucked in the *aṇḍa*-top and an auspicious lotus with a long stalk and prominent calyx shown above the *toraṇa* entrance. The most interesting part of the decoration lies in the oval lamps set up over the coping of the low rail around the drum; these illuminate the *aṇḍa* (Plate 17). The burning wicks are clearly seen, and it may be noted here that the *caitya*-mound is called in Telugu *Dīpāla-dinne*, meaning a mound of light.[18] This *sūcī* was considered unanimously by scholars as the earliest among the lot.[19] The label inscription reads: *Koramucakana Nalajarabhasa* ... in third-century B.C. characters. The pattern of the rail in both the cases, however, appears to correspond to a four-barred variety and not the three-barred one as noted in the granite uprights.

Of the same period is the massive inscribed *uṣṇiṣa* (37/104) with the label record reading *Rāja Kumārīya Sammaliyā*[20] *Parivēsakānaṁ unhisaṁ*; it is admirably fitted to the granite upright (No. 763) (Plate 18). Its flat top measured 41 cm width, the tenon length 19 cm, width 14 cm and height 10 cm (Plate 16), corresponding to the width of the flat soffit of the coping (40 cm) as well as its mortise hole underneath. This long coping (1.52 m) rested over two such granite uprights. The plain coping Burgess (No. 706) found close to *Mudukatala* pillar[21] also belongs to this earliest rail. The *Mudukatala* pillar itself was found close to the granite pillars at the south-east.

James Burgess first realized the importance of these granite blocks which were "carefully polished", having plain lenticular *sūcīs*, "lent into the edges of the granite pillars and considerably more apart than the other." These *sūcīs* were found closer to the granite verticals. He recalls, "just at this point in the circle it is that more archaic sculptures are found than anywhere else round the circle .... The granite pillars may have been the commencement of the early rail never completed."[22] Alexander Rea's[23] subsequent digs clarified the relative position between the limestone rail and granite uprights: "It was perfectly evident that they had originally stood against the outside of the great marble-rail," by which he meant the taller Sātavāhana rail pillars of Period III. He had also noted a Pāli inscription over the one at the east gate. All these recorded facts were ignored by almost all the recent writers on the subject.

2. Seated Yakṣa (Museum Accession No. 296/441)

By far the most outstanding specimen is the massive figure of a seated yakṣa in brown granite (Plate19 A-C). It is unfortunately headless and a defaced example at that, but it bears unmistakable traces of polish. It is a unique example of sculpture in round,[25] possibly the first of its kind from this region. The circumstances of its discovery have not been recorded anywhere, but it very probably belongs to the period of the massive granite rail pillars. (The height preserved is 90 cm; width 61 cm, thickness 27 cm.) The heavy body, its prominent paunch and the seated posture merits attention. Our specimen, being a seated one, cannot be compared to the colossal Vidiśā Yakṣa statues or the Paṭnā Yakṣas or the famous Parkham Yakṣa and Lohanipur Ṭīrthaṅkara, though all of them seem to belong to the Mauryan series. However, a unique terracotta from the Candraketugaṛh,[26] now in the National Museum and stylistically assigned to the Śuṅga period, is illustrated (Plate 20). This massive figure wearing a jeweled turban is seated with the right leg bent. A few other well-known limestone yakṣa and yakṣī figures from the post-Aśokan period at this very place, also recall their Bhārhut counterparts,[27] but the granite specimen is certainly older than these limestone examples both in style and workmanship. If, according to Coomaraswamy,[28] the Parkham Yakṣa is "The oldest known Indian stone sculpture in round," the Amarāvatī Yakṣa detailed here should also be assigned to the same period and considered as the oldest image from south-east India.

3. Limestone Upright Depicting an Elephant
(Field No. 739: Tr. YA 1–2)

Height of extant part 1.16 m; length 75 cm; thickness 34 cm; top tenon 19×12×3.5 cm. This upright discovered from the débris of the earliest level of Period II (*c.* 2nd century B.C.) bears a graphic depiction of a moving elephant under a fan-palm tree (Plate 21). This, along with the limestone copings containing three-barred rail pattern in relief (*infra*) were reused as buttresses in the later structures (Figure 2). Originally they must have formed part of the earliest sculptural décor of the main *stūpa* in the preceding Period I-B dated to the mid-third century B.C.

The figure of the elephant tusker, closely recalling *gajatama* (*gajottamaḥ*) of the Kālśī rock, stands for the Buddha[29] and reveals assuredness in carving. The

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theriomorphic representation of the Buddha, both in its depiction and demeanor, bears a clear Mauryan stamp as amply evident from such examples elsewhere like the *śveta-hastī* of Dhauli and the *gajatama* of Kālśī (Plate 22). The fan-palm shown at the backdrop has spread out pointed leaves and fruit bunches. The elephant also resembles ones on the lunette over the facade of Lomāś Ṛṣi cave. Though obtained from post-Aśokan levels, the depiction thus bears the stamp of Mauryan art and probably dates to that time. The other limestone uprights, bearing label inscription (A. Ghosh) Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 7A were post-Aśokan and formed part of the completed railing. Similarly the cross-bars bearing Nos. (A. Gosh), 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 18 to 22, 24 to 29, 31 to 32, 34 to 36 and Nos. (Sarma's) 75 and 76 also belonged to this very railing.

4. Coping with Three-Barred Rail Pattern
(Field Nos. 772-777) Tr. YA-2/2: Period II
(*c.* second century B.C.)

These coping slabs of limestone having plain three-barred rail pattern and semi-circular top formed part of an inner rail around the drum of the Aśokan *stūpa*. Having been abandoned, they were found laid in the foundations of a structure belonging to the subsequent period (Figure 2).

5. Sculptured Stele (Field No. 304, Museum Accession No. 441.1)

This was found during the excavations around the *stūpa* in 1958–59 by R. Subrahmanyam and published by A. Ghosh and H. Sarkar.[30] This pillar obliquely broken off at the top and totally defaced on one facet measures 1.84 m (lower 98 cm undressed) in height and 52 cm square. The other damaged example containing the scene of *Nairañjanāgamanaṁ* (Bodhgayā) perhaps was set up near the main entrance. A. Ghosh listed three more pillars (Nos. 38, 39, 40) of similar dimensions with well-marked capitals and octagonal shafts bearing short label inscriptions. These appear to be free-standing pillars with Buddhist symbols atop.

The scenes depicted on this important stele relate to Vaiśālī, Śrāvastī and Dhānyakaṭaka on the three intact faces, whereas the fourth face is damaged totally. It is relevant here to ponder over the lively narration on this damaged facet, for that is vital to determine the sequence of the scenes which portrayed important biographical details of the Master. Ghosh and Sarkar took the Vaiśālī to Kuśīnagara scene as the first in order of depiction and proceeded clockwise; Śrāvastī came second, Dhānyakaṭaka third and the final one is taken as the defaced one. Be that as it may, it must be stressed here that even the individual scenes were found depicted strictly in chronological order from bottom upwards and duly labeled. The narration also conforms with the biographical events[31] in the life of the Master from one facet to another. A reärrangement of their sequence is of seminal importance.

The stele was perhaps set up near the *toraṇa* entrance, and the first facet, the damaged one (Plate 23), faced east. This may sound like conjecture, but nevertheless it is essential to understand the subject matter portrayed in its proper chronological and synoptic perspective. This damaged facet contained scenes relating to the Buddha's birth, renunciation, the place of his first sermon and perhaps Rājagṛha,[32] where the Buddha took his abodes variously at Yaṣṭivana, Veṇuvana, Sītāvana Gṛdhrakūṭa hill, and other places. The broken piece depicting the scene of *Nairañjanāgamanaṁ*[33] seems to me a broken piece of this eastern face. The manner of synoptic depiction, the labeling of the scene and the size and style of the figures support this. The second facet, i.e. the northern one, depicts Dhānyakaṭaka (Plate 24); this part of the pillar is also damaged and only one scene, with the label *Dhaṁñakaḍa Vaṁdanāmagōthi*, survives. The third facet, the western one, narrates the Śrāvastī and Jetavana incidents (Plate 25). The last and fourth facet, the southern one, the most important and well preserved, (Plate 26) has six scenes, all pertaining to the last three months of the Buddha's life, beginning from Vaiśālī and ending with his *Mahāparinirvāṇa* at Kuśīnagara.

Here again, it is quite significant to note that even the words and phrases in each of the explanatory labels are virtually stereotyped versions occurring in the early Buddhist texts.[35] Examples are: (1) *Vesesalīya vihārāti Mahāvana Kūḍāgā (ra) śālāya*; (2) *(sa)ttho*; and (3) *nagapalogana*. It is well known that all the Vaiśālī *caityas* (Udena, Gotamaka, Sattaṁbaka, Bahuputta, Sarandāda, Chāpāla) were favorite resorts often praised by the Buddha himself. Their pictorial depiction is seen only here and nowhere else. In this unique biographical scene, the choice portrayal of Dhaṁñakaḍa before the Śrāvastī incidents and perhaps after Rājagṛha events may not be without significance. The depiction of the river Kṛṣṇā, particularly its north-easterly turn, is truthful;

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the flowers and *pādukā*-like objects shown in the waters suggestive of the Master's descent along the river course, call for a critical examination. Elsewhere such symbolic depictions stood for the presence of the Buddha.

Recent studies on *Kālacakratantra* by Helmutt Hoffmann have opened a new chapter. I quote here the views of this German scholar: "It seems to me, there cannot be the slightest doubt, that Buddha was supposed to have preached the Mahāyāna in general and especially the Kālacakra Mūlatantra at the well-known and famous Stūpa of Dhānyakaṭaka."[36] The Buddha's pronouncement of the third vehicle is expressly paralleled with the "second turning of the wheel, that of *Mahāyāna*" or "perfection of wisdom" on the mountain of Gṛddhakūṭa in Magadha. This was done on *Vaiśākha-pūrṇimā* day, and the Tibetan tradition even transferred the anniversary of the Buddha to *Jyeṣṭha* instead of *Vaiśākha*. Accordingly, the birth of the Lord was taken to be on *Jyeṣṭha Śu. Saptamī* day, Enlightenment and *Parinirvāṇa* on *Jyeṣṭha Śu.pūrṇimā* and *Dharmacakrapravartana* on *Śrāvaṇa Śukla Caturthī*. This is at variance with the *Sthāvira* tradition according to which the Birth, Enlightenment and *Parinirvāṇa* were all on *Vaiśākha Paurṇamī*; the *Dharmacakra-pravartana* being on *Aṣāḍha Paurṇamī* at Srāvastī. It is hazardous to rely solely on literary accounts such as mention of the Buddha's visit to Āndhra by Hiuen-Tsang,[37] the Jātaka story relating to the Buddha's birth as Sumedha in the city of Dhānyakaṭaka (according to the Buddhist work *Dhammapadāṭṭakathā*),[38] and the great ascetic Bāvarī despatching his disciples from Mūlaka (Godāvarī) to Rājagṛha[39] to meet the Buddha, but all these echo the prominence and sacredness attached to Āndhradeśa as an early center of Buddhism.

The Mahā-Sāṅghikas, who had their earliest stronghold at Vaiśālī, also appear to have held greater sway over coastal Āndhra, with Dhānyakaṭaka as their base, than anywhere else in Peninsular India. The Vaiśālī *caityas* depicted in the stele flourished during the time of Gautama. Further, various literary accounts (*Kathāvattu* and *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*) speak of Andhaka hegemony extending up to Magadha (Andhakavinda near Rājagṛha, Andhakavana near Śrāvastī). The various schools of Andhaka monks, and the specific inclusions of Dhaṁñakaḍa amidst these great places, lead to the inevitable conclusion that Amarāvatī's Buddhism was pre-Aśokan. Aśoka was perhaps impressed with the overwhelming enthusiasm and good work of the *goṣṭhīs* and the *nigamas* already flourishing at Dhānyakataka and favored the place as a main seat for spreading his *dharma* in south-east India. It is pertinent to note here that "Aśoka" was only a title conferred on him by the Buddhist Saṅgha subsequent to his conversion as *upāsaka* after the Kaliṅga war.[41] That he was known mostly by this popular name in the southern territories even as late as second century A.D. is attested to in an inscription from Sālihuṇḍam.[42]

RESUMÉ

The earliest railing at Amarāvatī, composed of granite uprights and limestone *sūcīs*, was a three-barred rail, not four-barred as depicted on an inscribed *sūcī* (Plate 15). The earliest *stūpa* was of mud, perhaps a low mound with brick lining along the periphery of the rim, like that of Piprahwā or Vaiśālī. The earliest railing was bigger than the later Sātavāhana elevated rail. To begin with, it was only partial, flanking the two cardinal entrances at the east and west, as the line-up of the granite uprights indicate. During the post-Aśokan period, the railing was extended to cover the remaining two wings, at the south as well as the north. The first completed railing fully along the perimeter came into existence by the end of second century B.C. Instead of granite, the softer marble-like local limestone was preferred for the entire sculptural and architectural work. It may be noted here that the entire scheme of the *mahācaitya*, its layout, sculptured décor, and perhaps the ritual and management of the *vihāra*, was planned right from the beginning. All the additions, alterations and replacements were governed by the guild (*nigamas* or *goṣṭhīs*) that administered this great religious establishment. This set-up was fully active in spite of the absence of imperial patronage and served the needs of the creed for a century and a half after the Mauryan rule. But with the dawn of the Christian era, there was enormous growth in the sectarian order. The advent of the imperial Sātavāhanas accelerated this process, and considerable patronage is seen during this economically prosperous period. The *mahāstūpa* has been well consolidated: its diameter, height and corresponding decoration were absolutely matched to create perfected elegance. The rail was tall with *toraṇadvāras*. The older members, notably the heavy rail members, were either buried under the leveled up raised floors or retained simply as buttresses. In any case, it is clear that the massive "Mauryan Polished"

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The architectural and related sculptural workmanship at the Amarāvatī *mahācaitya* deserves to be classified under two distinct stages. Stage-I commences with the Mauryan period and extends right up to the end of the first century B.C. Ample scope exists to study and correlate a wealth of art objects with epigraphs of this stage on them. More clear and specific palaeographical studies would yield meaningful results, particularly of the pre-Christian *caitya*. Stage-II commences with the beginning of the Christian era and continues up to the sixth-seventh century A.D. and later.[44]

Finally the four facets of an important stele portray a connected biography of the Buddha from Birth to Enlightenment to *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. In the manner of depiction, one can clearly notice a deliberate attempt not to crowd the subjects with vegetal, animal or human motifs, unlike the reliefs of Bhārhut, Bodhgayā and Sāñcī. The palaeography of the label records also betrays likeness to the shorter records over the granite rail (Plate 14 A) uprights and early plain copings of limestone.

From the foregoing one is in a position to conclude that the *stūpa* and the sculptural art in stone at Dhānyakaṭaka began during early Mauryan (probably pre-Aśokan) times,[45] and took firmer roots with the ennobling royal touch under Aśokan *dharma*. A small settlement of monks flourished a few decades prior to this cultural-art explosion. Amarāvatī-Dharaṇikoṭa certainly cannot be the only recipients of this great momentum. Further attempts should be so aimed as to trace the firmer and finer threads of this formative stage of art activity in south-east India.

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11. H. Sarkar sees no Theravādī impact but finds only Mahā-Sāṅghikas. But the former must have touched the place in an earlier wave. H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India*, New Delhi, 1968, pp. 99–100.

12. I. Karthikeya Sarma, "Epigraphical Discoveries at Guntupalli," *Studies in Indian Epigraphy*, Vol. V (1978), pp. 50–51.

13. *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XXXI (1955), p. 68.

14. Wilfred H. Schoff, *The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, 2nd ed., New Delhi, 1974, p. 252; In the *Mahāvagga* (V, 13, 12), in *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVII, p. 38; this is described as *Mahāśāla*, as a border country on the east of south India, near the town Śrāvatī.

15. P.V. Bapat, ed. *2500 Years of Buddhism*, New Delhi, 1976, p. 266.

16. Sarma, "Some More Inscriptions from Amarāvatī," pp. 62–63, 68, 72.

17. Ghosh, "Early Inscriptions."

18. A later inscription points to the erection of a lamp pillar too (*diva khabhō*) at the foot of the Mahācaitya: C. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvatī Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum, Madras,* No. c. 3.

19. Philippe Stern and Mireille Benisti, *Evolution du Style Indien d'Amarāvatī*. Paris 1961, Pl. II. B. and Vidya Dehejia, "Early Activity at Amarāvatī." *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. XXIII (1969–70), pp. 41 and 50, Fig. 1.

20. *A.R.I.E.*, 1953–54, No. 57, pp. 3, 21, and 35.

21. Jas Burgess, "The Buddhist Stupas of Amarāvatī and Jaggayyapeta in the Krishna District, Madras presidency, Surveyed in 1882," *Archaeological Survey of Southern India,* Vol. I, London 1887, p. 101.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23. The lenticular mortises of the granite uprights revealed traces of lime mortar, hence the suggestion that wooden *sūcīs* were fitted is not valid. *See* Sarma, "Some More Inscriptions from Amarāvatī," p. 72.

23. Rea, 1905–06, p. 119. Also note the significant remarks of Sten Konow and John Marshall on the unique discoveries of Rea, particularly with regard to the inscribed members and their date, *Ibid.*, pp. 164–165.

24. Burgess, *Archaeological Survey of Southern India*, I. All the taller and granite verticals, heavy cross-bars, and most of the drum slabs described in Chapters IV to VII belong to Period III.

25. This is in the reserve collection of the Site Museum at Amarāvatī; it bears Accession No. 296(441) and is described as a "Fragment representing a defaced figure of Kubēra or Yakṣa without head."

26. R.C. Agrawala, "Unpublished Yaksha-Yakshī Statues from Besanagar." *Lalit Kalā*, No. 14, pp. 47–49, Pl. XV, No. 5.

27. Sivaramamurti, *Amarāvatī Sculptures*, p. 27, Pl. XVIII, Nos. 2 and 3.

28. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Yaksas*, I, reprint ed., New Delhi 1971, p. 38, Pl. I.

29. D.C. Sircar, *Inscriptions of Aśhoka*, New Delhi 1967, Plate facing p. 32.

30. *Indian Archaeology—A Review*, 1958–59, p. 5: A. Ghosh and H. Sarkar, "Beginnings of Sculptural Art in South-East India: A Stele from Amarāvatī," *Ancient India* (1967), pp. 168–177. Also H. Sarkar and S.P. Nayanar, *Amarāvatī*, New Delhi 1972, pp. 13, 19.

31. For a fine sketch of the biography of the Buddha, *See* D. Mitra, *Buddhist Monuments*, Calcutta 1971, pp. 1–7.

32. Dhānyakaṭaka was in close touch with Rājagṛha. See I.K. Sarma, "An Ivory Seal from Dhānyakaṭaka Excavations," *Indian Antiquary*, Third Series, Vol. V, No. 3 (1971), pp. 128–133. Also *Lüders List*, p. 148, No. 1250. Also with Pāṭalīputra; *see* R.P. Chanda, "Some Unpublished Amarāvatī Inscriptions," *E.I.*, XX, No. 3 (1919–1920), p. 262.

33. P.R. Srinivasan, "Recently discovered Early Inscriptions from Amarāvatī and their Significance," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 10, (October, 1961), pp. 59–60, Fig. 2. The Yakṣa Cadamuka figure is actually a part of a squarish drum slab of post-Aśokan Period and not a pillar or rail part.

34. T.W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Suttas*, *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XI, Oxford 1881, p. 40; Also Spencer Hardy, *A Manual of Buddhism*, London 1880, p. 343. For other places in Vaiśālī where the Buddha lived see Cowell, ed. *Divyāvadāna* Ch. XI and XII.

35. *Mahā Parinirvāṇa Sūttānta; Dighanikāya Text: Pāli Text Society*, Vol. II, London 1903, pp. 72–168; Translation: T.W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Suttas*, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XI, Oxford 1881, pp. 1–136; Also *Chullayagga* (V, 13, 2, 13).

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36. Helmutt Hoffmann, "Buddha's preaching of the Kālacakra Tantra at the Stūpa of Dhānyakaṭaka," *German Scholars on India*, Vol. I, Varanasi 1973, p. 140. Hoffmann's views quoted below are stated in other parts of this same article, pp. 136–140.

37. Thomas Walters, *On Yuan Chwang*, Vol. II, New Delhi 1961, p. 209. It reads "Near the South-West of this monastery was an Aśoka Tope where the Buddha preached, displayed miracles and received into his religion a countless multitude."

38. K.R. Subrahmaniam, *Buddhist Remains and History of Andhra*, Madras 1932, pp. 3–4; Also N. Ramesan, *Andhra Pradesh through the Ages*, Hyderabad 1967, p. 6.

39. *Suttanipāta*, 1011–1013. *Sacred Books of East*, Vol. XI, pt. II, p. 180. S. Dutta, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries in India*, London 1962, p. 120.

40. H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India*, New Delhi 1966, pp. 12, 99–100.

41. M.C. Joshi and J.C. Joshi "A Study in the Names of Aśoka," *Journal of Oriental Institute*, Vol. XVII, No. 4 (1968), pp. 415–24. A recently discovered minor rock edict in Pangurerla village near Hoshangabad in Madhya Pradesh reads clearly "Priyadarsi nāma rāja" in Pāli—see *Hindu* dated 27th January 1978. The four minor rock edicts from Nittūr and Udagolam (Siruguppa tāluk, district Bellary), Karṇāṭaka, mention the king's name both as Devānāṁpiya and Rājā Aśoka. No other edicts mention these two names together. V.K. Misra, "Aśokan Edicts in South India; Some Fresh Thinking," *Fifth Annual Congress, Epigraphical Society of India, Souvenir*, Bangalore 1979, pp. 4–8, Pls. Also see S.H. Ritti and B.K. Guru Raja Rao, ed. *A Decade of Archaeological Studies in South India*, Dharwar 1978, p. 117.

42. A.S. Gadre "Brāhmī Inscription from Sālihundam," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXI, No. 14, pp. 87–88, Pl. The inscription is on an encasement slab over the drum of the Mahācaitya.

43. Karl Khandalavala on C. Sivaramamurti's *Indian Sculpture* in "Reviews," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 9 (1961), p. 70; Karl Khandalavala on *J.I.S.O.A.* in "Reviews," *ibid.*, No. 18 (1977), p. 47.

44. Sarkar and Nainar, *Amarāvatī*, pp. 8–9.

45. A recent writer on the subject has said: "It is difficult to say when the sculpture was added to the *stūpa*. The Aśokan structure in the third century B.C. must have been devoid of it." N.S. Ramaswamy, *Amarāvatī—The Art and History of the Stupa and the Temple*, Hyderabad 1975, p. 39.

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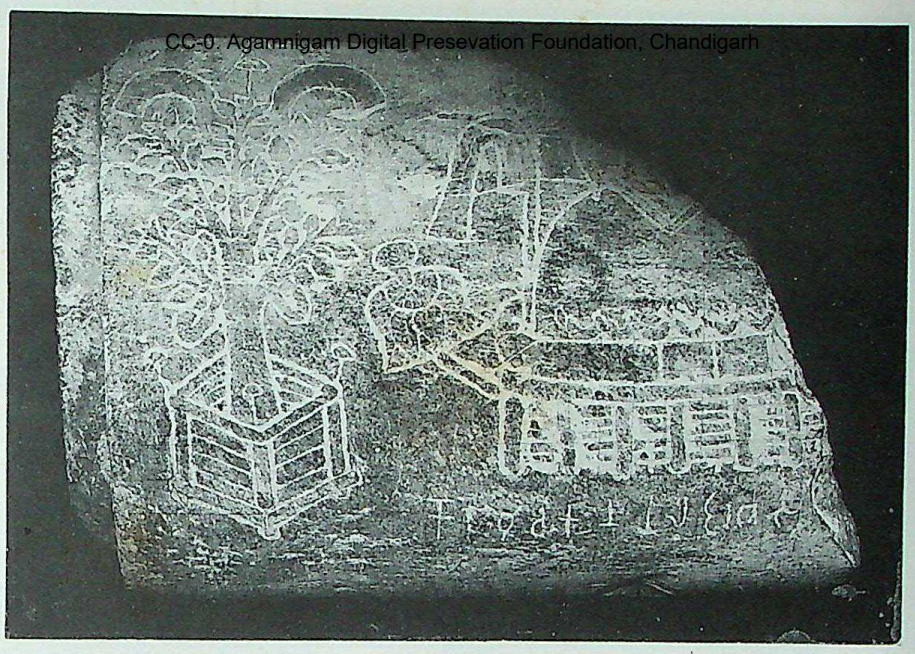

Plate 17. Amarāvatī. Inscribed cross-bar. Period I-B, third century B.C.

Plate 18. Amarāvatī. Granite upright (no. 763) with top tenon Tr-XA5/4.

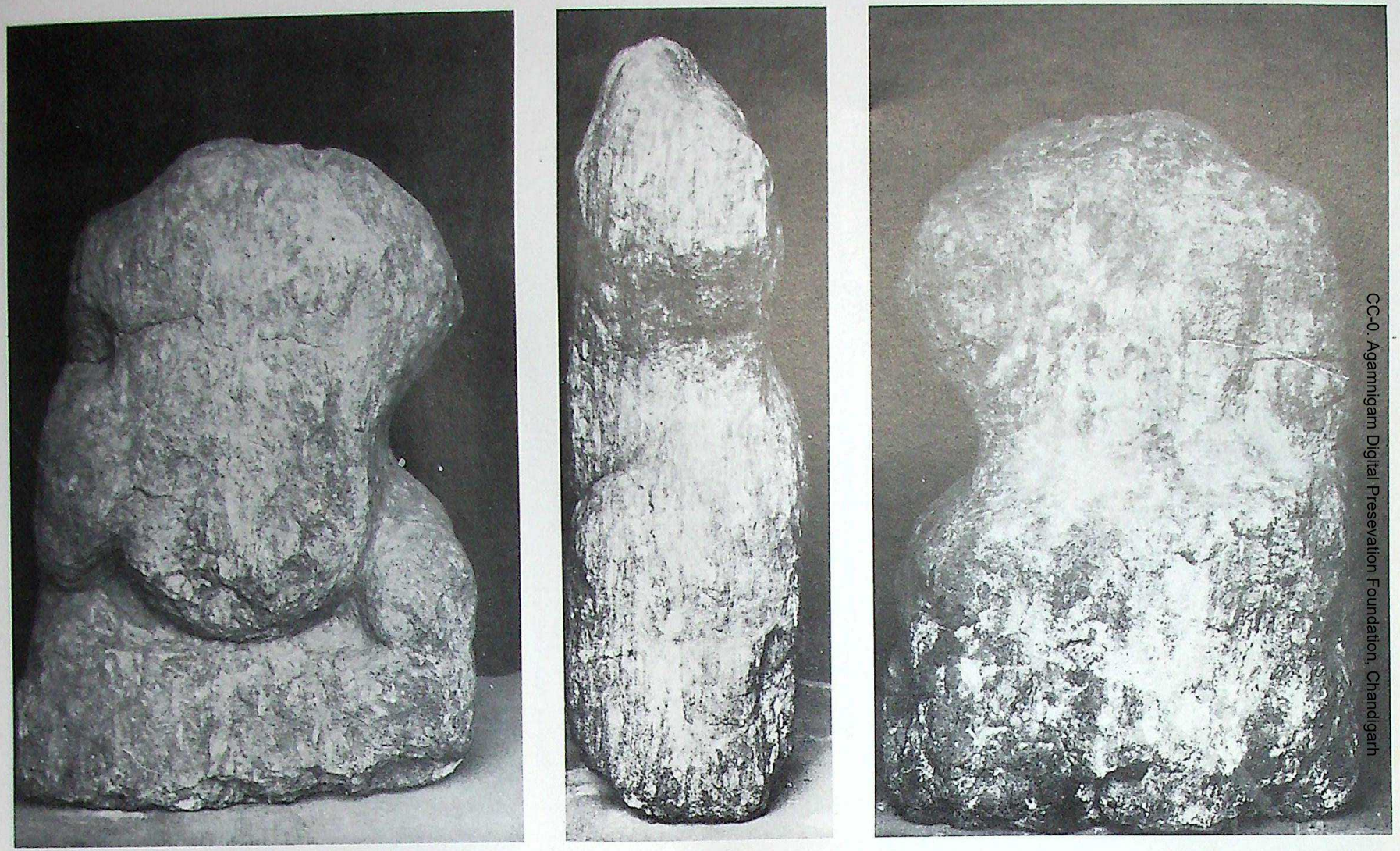

Plate 19. Amarāvatī. Seated Yakṣa (torso). Period I-B.

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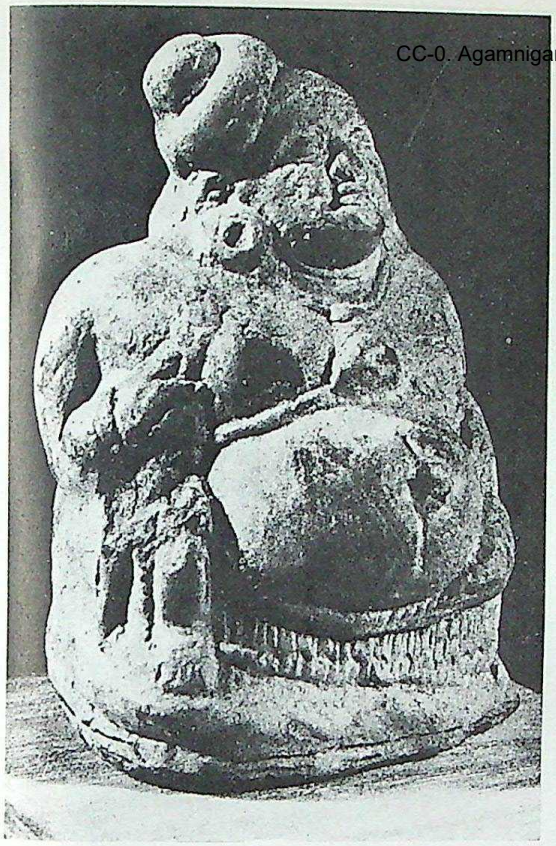

Plate 20. Chandraketugaṛh. Terracotta *yakṣa*, second century B.C.

Plate 21. Amarāvatī. Elephant on a limestone upright. Period II, second century B.C.

Plate 22. Kālsi. Elephant over the rock boulder. Mauryan, third century B.C.

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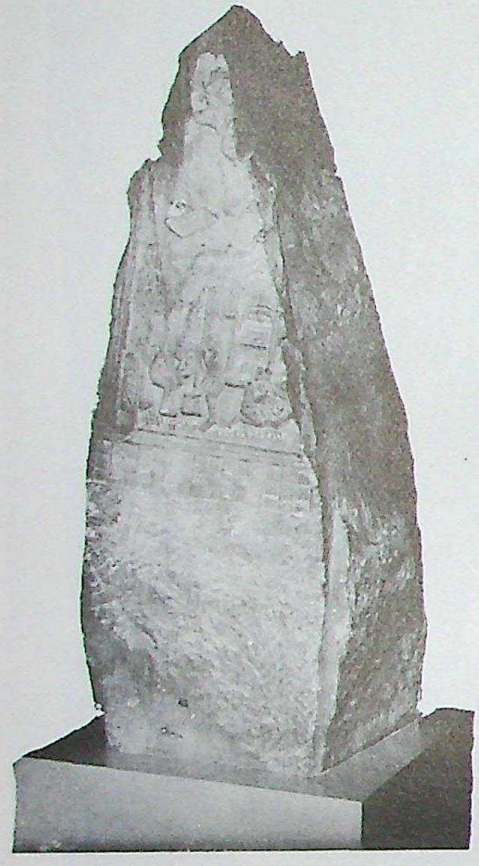

Plate 23. Amarāvatī. Inscribed stele: Facet one (eastern) and four (southern).

Plate 24. Amarāvatī. Stele: second facet (northern).

Dhaṁñakaḍa Vaṁda-nāma gōṭṭi.
(written vertically, top to bottom)

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Plate 25. Amarāvatī. Stele: third facet (western).

2. *Jetavana Aradhapidikasa aramo*

1. *Savathi*

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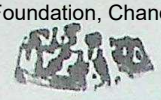


E.

(*sa*) *lavane bhagavato*
parinivute

C.

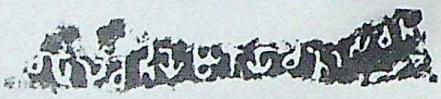
(*Vesa*) *liya* (or *ye*) *viharati*
Mahavane kudaga (*ra*)
(*sa*) *laya*

D.

naga (*va*) *logana*

A.

Bahuputa cetiya Vesalakani
cetiyani.



B.

Capala-cetiya (or *ye*) *Maro*
yacate osathata (or *ti*)

Plate 26. Amarāvatī. Stele: fourth facet (southern).

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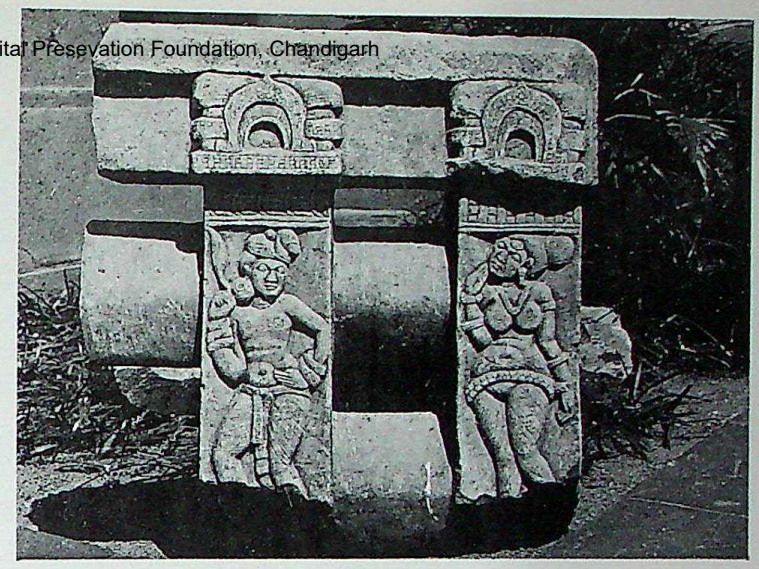

Plate 28. Amarāvatī. Newly discovered rail slab of the *harmikā*. Early Amarāvatī style. *c.* 1st century B.C.

Plate 27. Amarāvatī. Stele depicting the scene of Dhānyakaṭaka. Early Amarāvatī style. *c.* 2nd century B.C.

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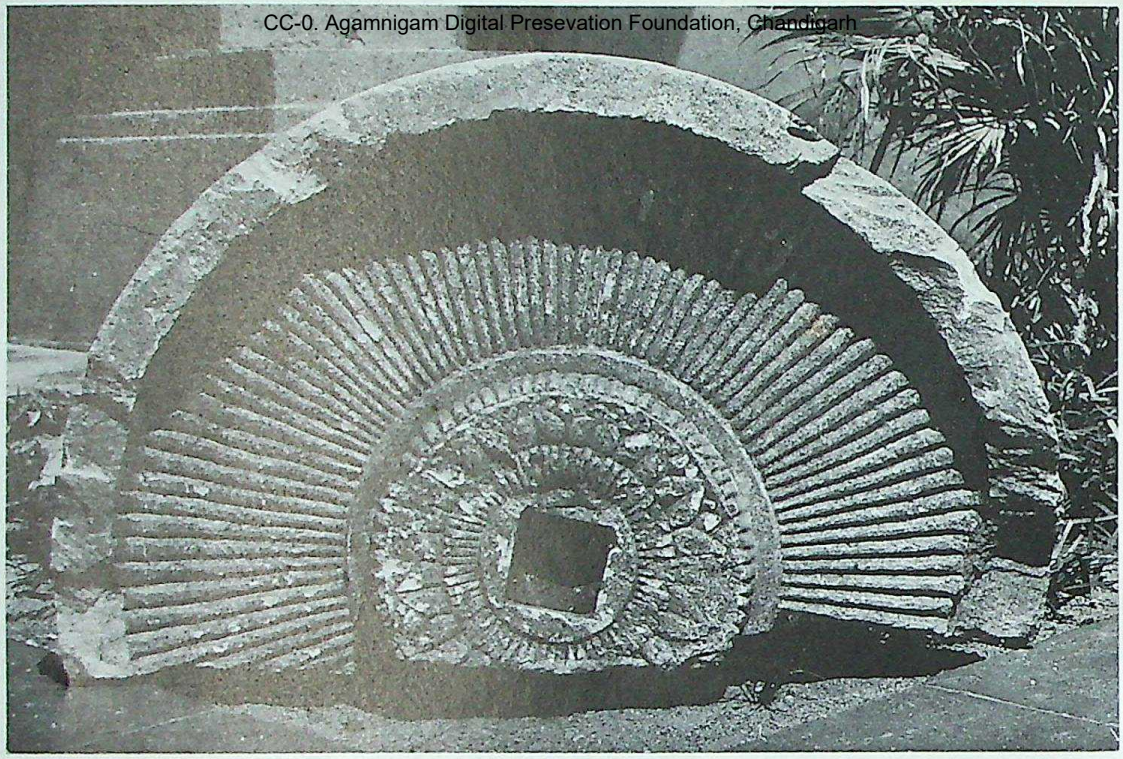

Plate 29. Amarāvatī. Newly discovered *stūpa*. *Chatra*. Early Amarāvatī style. *c*. 1st century. B C.

Plate 30. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Inscribed sculpture panel Ikṣvāku. Late Amarāvatī style. *c*. 3rd centuryA.D.

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4

On the Utilization of Epigraphs for Art History: Some Andhra Examples

R. SUBRAHMANYAM

A FEW EXAMPLES from the Andhra country well illustrate my contention that in utilizing epigraphical data for art historical reconstruction, it is necessary to take into account various associated factors like the material on which the inscription is written, its location and mode of occurrence in addition to the inscription's contents and palaeographical features. Doing so is essential particularly in the context of art schools for which reliable chronological data are wanting.

I

With the discovery of the inscribed fragment of an "Aśokan" pillar and the granite railing with short inscriptions in the Mauryan script at Amarāvatī,[1] many believe that the *mahāstūpa* there came into existence during the time of Aśoka, who, according to a tradition, erected a large number of *stūpas* in different parts of his dominion. The script and partly the text, and the polish on the stone are the main reasons for associating it with Aśoka. Although the script of the inscriptions on the granite railing *appear to be* Mauryan in age, they have been engraved in such a position and alignment that they must have been incised *in situ*, after the railing had been set in position. While only a few of the inscriptions refer to the donation of items like the *thabo*, most reveal only personal names. One must consider whether these latter inscriptions could be just pilgrim records, and whether there are recognizable differences in the letter types from the inscriptions recording donations proper. In any event, the inscriptions were engraved in such a manner as to indicate an interval of time between setting up the railing and carving of at least some of the inscriptions. Moreover, the inscriptions are on the railing, necessarily an accessory item to the main *stūpa*.

This railing is stone, but there is little evidence elsewhere to show that stone railings were common during the time of Aśoka. In addition, the members of this railing are so well made as to suggest an amount of technical maturity in stone working on the part of the artisans. Furthermore, the stone used is not soft limestone but hard granite which must have been specially quarried and brought from a distance for this purpose. That is the case also with the Aśokan pillar fragment. If the inscriptions on such architectural pieces are considered Aśokan in date, it becomes essential to consider the possibility of the prior existence of the Amarāvatī *stūpa* on one hand, and on the other of the existence of a sophisticated urban community which was exposed to ideas coming from Northern India and was capable of providing scope for the development of sophisticated art resulting in such good technique in stone cutting and polishing as represented by the granite stone railings.

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II

A stele brought to light in my 1958 excavation at Amarāvatī, a rare piece carved in a style much different from that of the regular Amarāvatī School and possessing label inscriptions written in an early variety of Brāhmī script, has attracted much attention. On the basis of style and palaeography, A. Ghosh and H. Sarkar[2] dated it to the second century B.C., but they also added that it "marks the beginnings of the art at Amarāvatī in particular and South-East India in general." For a proper assessment of the piece, however, data besides the inscription and artistic style must be examined. As the label inscriptions reveal, the stele depicts incidents from the Buddha's life. One face illustrates those that happened at Śrāvastī, and the other depicts those at Vaiśālī. The remaining two faces probably also depicted events from the Buddha's life. The inscription on the third face (Plate 27) specifically mentions Dhānyakaṭaka (i.e. Amarāvatī), so the sculpture, I believe, probably depicted something connected with the Buddha's life at this place. Some late legends do refer to the Buddha's visit to Dhānyakaṭaka. Whether this is true or not, here appears to be evidence that by the time the stele was carved (*c.* second century B.C.), stories that the Buddha had visited this town were current, implying that the Buddhist association with the place then must have been fairly old. Further, the depiction of Dhānyakaṭaka on this stele at Dhānyakaṭaka itself, reveals that the sophisticated architecture shown here must have been in existence there when it was carved, possibly indicating an earlier date for the beginning of the Buddhist establishment.

The stele is of the local limestone and hence of local manufacture. As had been pointed out rightly by Ghosh and Sarkar, the modeling is much more advanced than the Bharhut railing sculptures. Not the work of the novice in the field, it betrays fairly successful attempts at perspective and organization. Is it not likely that the local artists gained this stage of maturity through a period of experimentation? Hence, just because this stele bears an inscription datable to second century B.C., and thus happens to be the earliest known from the region, it should not be considered as "marking the beginning of art" at Amarāvatī. The epigraphical evidence may be indicative of the date of the sculpture, but not exactly of the beginning of sculptural art of the region.

Although no sculpture datable to a period earlier than the present stele has been noticed so far at Amarāvatī, there is every likelihood of the presence of such items there. It would be reasonable to suppose that the stele illustrating Dhānyakaṭaka along with other places of Buddhist association, may have depicted the *stūpa* of the place. Or, if the *stūpa* was considered to have been of a later date than the incident in the life of the Buddha associated with Dhānyakaṭaka, at least some spot which was associated with the Buddha may have been depicted here. Such a spot would have been deemed sacred and hence would deserve to be commemorated with a *stūpa*.

It can be seen from the representation of Dhānyakaṭaka on the stele (Plate 27) that the whole scene of the town is laid on the bank of the river. But the presently known *stūpa* at Amarāvatī is nearly a kilometer from the river. However, some *stūpa* must have stood on the bank of the river itself. That *stūpa* recently has been discovered.

Its remains form a huge mound rising to a height of about 10 meters and covering an area of about five acres. It is located at a bend in the river, an item prominently shown in the stele. We have been able to collect pieces of a *harmikā* with the representation of a man and woman in a style much earlier than any other sculpture known from Amarāvatī (Plates 28 and 29). Further excavations, which are planned, may yield more details.

III

While it is generally true that an art object and the inscription found on it are coeval, sometimes that is not the case. The epigrapher must take into account the position of the inscription and other contextual factors. A good instance illustrating this need is the inscription seen on a sculptured slab (Plate 30) found at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. The inscription is engraved on a flat strip at the bottom of a long slab 2.6×.3 m which depicts four scenes from the Buddha's life, each set in a circular medallion and separated by rectangular panels showing amorous couples. The inscription states that a stone image of the Buddha[3] was installed by one Kumāranandi in the 24th regnal year of the Ikṣvāku king Ehuvala Cāntamūla. The editor of the inscription, drawing his inference from the phrase "*iyam .... pratimā pratiṣṭhāpitā*", has concluded that it refers to the sculptured slab on which the record is engraved. But the donation recorded in

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the inscription is an image (*pratimā*) of the Buddha, while the sculpture on which it is engraved is a long flat slab depicting several narrative scenes in relief.

The slab in question was found inside an apsidal structure, a little in front of a platform raised at the apsidal end. The size and the position of its location indicate that it was a casing slab set at the top edge of that platform. On the platform must have stood the stone image of the Buddha referred to in the inscription.

Of the hundreds of sculptures recovered from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, this is the only one on which scenes are depicted within circular medallions. The format is alien to the Ikṣvāku age, but it was fairly common at Amarāvatī, possibly in the pre-Ikṣvāku phase. The *caitya*-hall in which the slab was found may belong to the earliest phase in the history of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, and if that is the case, the reliefs of the inscribed slab would naturally follow the pre-Ikṣvāku sculptural tradition. This contention is supported by the present inscription itself, which says that "an image made of stone" (*Śailamayī pratimā*) was installed. The common word used for an image is simply *pratimā*, and the specific reference to *śailamayī pratimā* in the present inscription possibly indicates that the stone image replaced a previous one made of wood or stucco. On this occasion, then, the present inscription would have been carved on the flat vacant strip of the broad pedestal. The reliefs of the inscribed slab, however, should not be considered dated in spite of the inscription's date.

NOTES

1. D.C. Sircar, "Fragmentary pillar inscription from Amaravati," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV, Part 1 (1963–64), pp. 40–43.

2. A. Ghosh and H. Sarkar, "Beginnings of Sculptural Art in South-East India; A Stele from Amaravati," *Ancient India*, Nos. 20–21 (1967), pp. 168–177.

3. D.C. Sircar, "Inscription of the time of Ehuvula Chāntamūla, Year 24," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV, (1963–64), pp. 11–13.

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5

The Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Phase of the Lower Kṛṣṇā Valley Art: A Study Based on Epigraphical Data

H. SARKAR

THE LOWER Kṛṣṇā valley witnessed a distinctive art tradition which had at least two phases of ascendancy—one at Amarāvatī in the third quarter of the second century A.D. and the other in the last quarter of the third century at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Besides these two, there may have been other peaks of development, but currently very little is known of them since one has never tried to determine minute stylistic differences arising out of temporal factors and individual styles of the sculptors from differing guilds. Nor is it always borne in mind that an art tradition could have a multilateral, not unilateral, development. Against this background, Barrett's statement that the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is wholly the baroque phase of Amarāvatī[1] seems to ignore the complex process of artistic development. To show the roots of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa's art, this study must begin with the last Sātavāhana phase, but not the latest phase, of the art of Amarāvatī.[2]

As is well known, Barrett's chronology of Amarāvatī art is based mainly on two epigraphical landmarks: inscriptions of Vāśiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi (*c.* A.D. 130–59) and Siri Sivamaka Sada or Śivaskanda Sātakarṇi (*c.* A.D. 167–74),[3] the mature phase coinciding with the latter's reign-period. Sivaramamurti has also worked out his periods mainly on the basis of epigraphical data. Barrett has ascribed some dome-slabs, now in the British Museum, to the mature phase, while Sivaramamurti has placed similar examples, exhibited in the Government Museum, Madras, in his second period i.e. *c.* 100–150 A.D.[4] These dome slabs are carved and often inscribed. Divided into three vertical registers, they depict scenes from the Buddha's life although the Buddha is yet not shown in the anthropomorphic form.

Similar dome-slabs are housed in the Archaeological Museum, Amarāvatī, and one of them bears a Sanskrit inscription of Gautamīputra Yajña Sātakarṇi,[5] who came after Śivaskanda Sātakarṇi. Following the *Matsya Purāṇa*, which states that Yajña Sātakarṇi ruled for twenty-nine years,[6] Barrett assigns his reign to *c.* 175–203, and Sircar gives the dates 174–202. Thus this inscribed dome-slab falls in the transition from the Middle to the Late Phase, placed about the end of the second century according to Barrett's chronology; on the other hand, following Sivaramamurti's periodization, it has to be ascribed to his late third or the early fourth period. The inscription shows that Barrett is nearer the truth, provided there is no dispute about Yajña Sātakarṇi's period of rule. Whichever may be the case, it is of utmost importance to study these dome-slabs from the point of view of style, for they appear to constitute the last Sātavāhana phase of the lower Kṛṣṇā valley art. However, this period does not immediately precede the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, as there is a time-interval between this phase and the beginning of the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa art.

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These carvings appear archaic because of the symbolic representations of the Buddha; otherwise, the figures seem conventionalized and lack instinctive appeal. Indeed, this is what may be called the "Mannerist phase" at Amarāvatī, absent at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

What happened towards the end of Yajña Sātakarṇi's rule is not known for certain. D.C. Sircar's straight line chronology shows that three kings followed in succession,[7] namely Vijaya, Caṇḍaśrī and Puḷumāvi, who ruled, according to the *Purāṇas*, for six, ten, and seven years respectively. All the three kings are known from inscriptions—whose pattern of distribution is interesting: Vāśiṣṭhīputra Caṇḍa Sātakarṇi's only inscription comes from Koḍavali[8] in the Godāvarī basin, Gautamīputra Vijaya Sātakarṇi's from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa[9] in the Kṛṣṇā Basin and Puḷumāvi's from Myākaḍoni[10] in the Karṇāṭaka plateau. Does this pattern of distribution indicate that these kings, besides various scions of the Sātavāhana family[11] and other powerful feudatories, had been ruling independently after the disappearance of the central authority? It sounds quite reasonable that towards the end of Yajña Sātakarṇi's reign or after his death, Vijaya Sātakarṇī declared himself independent and established his kingdom in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa region. His capital was named Vijayapurī, after his own name, and all epigraphs from various sites of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa refer to the place as *Śrīparvate Vijayapura*.[12] Evidently the ancient city of Vijayapurī was not founded by the Ikṣvākus,[13] who very possibly were first established elsewhere. This explains the absence of any inscription of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Cāṁtamūla, the founder of the southern Ikṣvākus; his inscriptions came from Kesanapalle[14] and Reṇṭala,[15] both Buddhist sites in Guntūr District. No structure at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa can be ascribed to Cāṁtamūla although there is an evidence of a Buddhist establishment during the time of Vijaya Sātakarṇi. The latter's epigraph, beginning with an invocation to the Buddha (*namo bhagavato Aga pogalasa*),[16] is inscribed on a limestone pillar. It is quite likely that Cāṁtamūla's territory was originally confined to the Kesanapalle-Reṇṭala region, and from there he began his career of conquest. At some later date he might have wrested the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa territory from Vijaya Sātakarṇi and made Vijayapurī his capital.

A number of memorial pillars (*chāyā-stambha*) raised in honour of fallen heroes, soldiers and generals[17] provide ample evidence that a battle was fought at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. However, it is difficult to connect the event of Cāṁtamūla's war with Vijaya Sātakarṇi. Among these memorial pillars, the one in front of the eastern gate of the citadel seems especially important for art history. The carving depicts an elephant with a rider who may be the Kuḷahaka chief Cāṁtamūla in whose honour the memorial was raised. Below it is a carelessly incised epigraph[18] lacking the florid style typical of the Ikṣvāku palaeography. Similarly, neat or ornate palaeography is likewise lacking in the memorial of one Mūlabhūta, an artisan (*āvesani*). Undoubtedly, these inscriptions were executed at a time when the valley had fewer expert scribes and artists, although in the absence of a date or datable factors, they cannot with certainty be considered as belonging to the earliest phase of art and palaeography of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

The first definite landmark of Ikṣvāku art and palaeography is the memorial pillar (Plate 31) of Cāṁtamūla I set up by the female members of the palace in the reign of his son Māṭharīputra Vīrapuruṣadatta.[19] All five registers, carved in low relief, do not exhibit good workmanship. Here the life-scenes of the founder of the dynasty have been portrayed, but the style only remotely resembles the mature phase of Amarāvatī or Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Perhaps this memorial column was raised shortly after his death, when the artistic activities and structural enterprises in this area had just begun. Guilds of artists, artisans, masons and others associated with them were not by then attracted to the newly established city of Vijayapurī. On the other hand, by the sixth regnal year of Vīrapuruṣadatta, one Reverend Ānanda acted as the *navakarmika* for the construction of the *mahācaitya*.[20] In an inscription of the fourteenth regnal year of Vīrapuruṣadatta it is found that three more *navakarmikas*, namely Candramukha, Dharmanandi and Nāga, and also one *śaila vardhaki* Vidhika,[21] had arrived in the valley indicating the beginning then of intensive structural activities to follow.

There is no direct evidence that the artisans and masons had migrated from Amarāvatī to Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, as assumed by Barrett,[22] for there is a hiatus of some years between the decline of the Amarāvatī art and the emergence of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa as the principal atelier in the lower Kṛṣṇā valley. In the undressed part of some slabs at Amarāvatī engraved names like Nāgabu and Dharma are found, and their

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palaeography indicates a date in the second century A.D. This becomes clear once the palaeography of the name Dhamasa occurring in the undressed part of a sculptured slab at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Plate 32) is compared with Dhamasa (Plate 33) of Amarāvatī.

The political background that has been sketched leaves no doubt about the time-gap between the last Sātavāhana phase represented by the rule of Yajña Sātakarṇi at Amarāvatī and the beginning of the artistic activities at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. No absolute chronology for the reign-periods of kings[23] who ruled during this time can be computed in the present state of knowledge, yet the following table will provide the necessary background for periodizing and assessing the artistic achievements under the Ikṣvākus:

Gautamīputra Yajña Sātakarṇi	174–202	A.D.
Gautamīputra Vijaya Sātakarṇi	203–209	A.D.
Vāśiṣṭhīputra Cāṁtamūla	210–235	A.D.
Māṭharīputra Vīrapuruṣadatta	236–260	A.D.
Vāśiṣṭhīputra Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla	261–285	A.D.
Vāśiṣṭhīputra Rudrapuruṣadatta	286–300	A.D.

It is evident from the table that more than a quarter of a century intervened between the last phase of Amarāvatī and the beginning of the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. But for the memorial pillars, one does not know of any sculpture which safely can be ascribed to Vīrapuruṣadatta's time although several *stūpas* were built by him. Nonetheless, a few *stūpa*-slabs—the actual locations of which are not known—show carvings in low relief and may be assigned to the early phase of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Some amount of stylization is evident in them, especially in the *chatras* surmounting the representation of *stūpas*, which are mostly plain and not associated with any anthropomorphic form of the master. In such examples, the Buddha is represented by such symbols as the wheel, feet, column of fire, and throne with *svastika*. On the whole, the sculptural art of the time of Vīrapuruṣadatta lacks spontaneity and assuredness.

The middle phase of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa synchronized with the early years of Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla. Although the sculptures of this period are not inscribed, they come from Site 9, datable to the eighth regnal year of Ehuvala (*c.* 269 A.D.) on the basis of more than one epigraph.[24] A.H. Longhurst has published half a dozen photographs of the sculptured friezes from the site.[25] Themes depicted included scenes from the *Śaśa-jātaka*, *Māndhātu-jātaka*, and one panel each showing Nāga Mucalinda and the conversion of Yakṣa Āḷavaka (Plate 34). A glance at these reliefs shows that the figures are somewhat short and plump, with little attenuation of limbs. A feature that catches the eye is the tight-fitted cloth head-dress, with a knot on one side in most cases. In the depiction of the story of the *Śaśa-jātaka*, indubitably the handiwork of another artist, skill in the delineation of animal-figures is clearly manifest. But being executed in low relief, the panel lacks the vigor and the instinctive appeal so apparent in the mature art phase of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Taken collectively these bas-reliefs from Site 9 herald the beginning of considerable artistic activity during the Ikṣvāku period; incidentally this time also marks the first use of metrical Sanskrit, perhaps in the wake of close contact with the Śakas of Ujjain. Figures carved in the round must have appeared in this period as is evident from a mutilated standing image of Buddha inside an apsidal shrine at Site 9. It is, then, evident that the art phase of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa began its real florescence about seventy years after its commencement.

There is no clearly datable series of the third or most evolved phase except a long panel (Plate 30) from Site 106 dated in the twenty-fourth regnal year of Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla (*c.* 285 A.D.).[26] It shows, alternately, *mithuna*-figures and scenes from the Buddha's life. In artistic vision as well as in the elegant style of execution, it represents the zenith of the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Sculptured slabs recovered from Sites 2, 3, 6, 32A and 78 bear close affinity to the above-mentioned frieze.[27]

The one other milestone of the evolved phase comes from Site 29, the temple-site of Aṣṭabhujasvāmī Nārāyaṇa.[28] From this site were discovered (i) the inscribed stone pedestal with a socket for a wooden image, (ii) conch shells (Plate 35), one of them incised with a *cakra*-capital and the inscription of *Bhagavato Aṭhabhujasamisa*[29] and (iii) two limestone shafts having minute carvings and ornamentation comparable to those bearing Śaka figures from Site 37.[30] The inscription of the stone pedestal is of Ābhīra Vasuṣeṇa, who is mentioned along with other contemporary kings but not the ruling monarch of the Ikṣvāku dynasty. On the basis of this evidence, one may postulate an Ābhīra interregnum or the formal acknowledgement of Ābhīrā supremacy by the Ikṣvākus. The inscription is dated in the year 30 of an era[31] which may very well be the Ābhīra-Traikūṭaka era. In that case the epigraph has to be dated to 278

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A.D. (248+30), i.e. very much within the reign of Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla.

Whatever may be the political conditions of the time, there is enough evidence that Cāṁtamūla's period was marked by closer Śaka contact than during his predecessor's reign—both Vīrapuruṣadatta and Ehuvala married Śaka princesses. Incidentally, the name Rudrapuruṣadatta signifies, as it were, the fusion of the two dynasties and their cultures. There might have been other influences which converged in this period to give rise to vigorous art and architectural activities. The memorial pillars must have been inspired by the similar traditions in Gujarat and central India, but this trend came into the valley in the time of Vīrapuruṣadatta. Likewise the idea of a tank attached to the temple might have spread from Mathurā [32] and other north Indian sites. At Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, a stepped masonry tank was excavated at Site 64, the site associated with the stone-mason Vidhika, a contemporary of Vīrapuruṣadatta and Site 122, the latter encircled by a number of Brahmanical temples including the Puṣpabhadrasvāmi and Saravadeva.[33] Significantly, the Puṣpabhadrasvāmi temple built in the sixteenth regnal year of Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla has been called in its *dhvaja-stambha* inscription a *devakula*,[34] while the Sarvadeva temple of his eleventh regnal year is mentioned as a *prāsāda*.[35] Another *devakula* with a *sthala*[36] (perhaps hypaethral) is the Naḍagisvarasvāmi temple at Site 127. Thus Ehuvala's period witnessed a phenomenal rise not only in the activities of Buddhist art and architecture but also in Brahmanical structures, of which temples of Kārttikeya perhaps occupied a special place. There are at least two images of Kārttikeya, in the round though very much mutilated, and it is well known that the Ikṣvāku rulers were worshippers of this deity (*Mahāsena parigahitsa* and *Kārttikeya-p-prasādat*).

It is no exaggeration to say that Ehuvala's period was the golden age of Ikṣvāku art and architecture, and this phase is comparable in attainments to the most developed phase of Amarāvatī. Executed in bold relief, these sculptures possess rhythm and clarity of lines, and the figures—there are multitudes of them—are so balanced in a composition as to create both harmony and beauty. Figures are slim, with attenuated waist, and show subtle overall expression. Equally important is the variety in themes devoted to *Jātaka* stories and the Buddha's life and often based on Sanskrit works like the Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarānandakāvya* and the *Lalita-vistara*.

After Ehuvala Cāṁtamūla, there was perhaps a decline in the artistic pursuit, and this can very well be gathered from the toilet scene of the Śaka princess Vaṁmabhaṭṭā, wife of Ehuvala. It is on a memorial pillar (Plate 36) set up by her son Rudrapuruṣadatta in his eleventh regnal year (297 A.D.). Carved in low relief, it is devoid of the characteristics of the mature phase which had just preceded it. This sudden fall is rather inexplicable unless it is presumed that a fratricidal war broke out after the death of Ehuvala, and this uneasy political situation cast its shadow on the artistic pursuits as well. The only tenuous evidence for this theory is that Rudrapuruṣadatta had Ehuvala's matronym Vāsiṣṭhīputra and that the Puṣpabhadrasvāmi temple refers to one Hārītiputra Vīrapuruṣadatta as the son of Ehuvala and the builder of the temple. The fate of this prince after Ehuvala's death is still unknown.

Though there is an underlying unity in the art-style of the various sites of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, the hands of different artists or guilds are still discernible. For instance, sculptural representations from Site 3 (Plate 37) appear to be slightly superior to those from Site 2, (Plate 38) which often show the combination of the two scenes in one panel without the slightest attempt to differentiate one from the other. In such scenes the Buddha is shown twice but generally in two different attitudes. The changes in style and motif of works from these periods are not paralleled by any significant change in palaeography. In point of fact, it is extremely difficult to date inscriptions very precisely on palaeographic grounds for the period beginning from Yajña Sātakarṇi to Rudrapuruṣadatta, the last known Ikṣvāku ruler.

Yet the contents of the inscriptions give important clues about the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa phase of Kṛṣṇā Valley art, showing that its beginning, climax and decline do not necessarily coincide with those phases at Amarāvatī. Decidedly, Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa phases are the manifestations of the same art tradition, yet the art of these two sites is not strictly contemporary.

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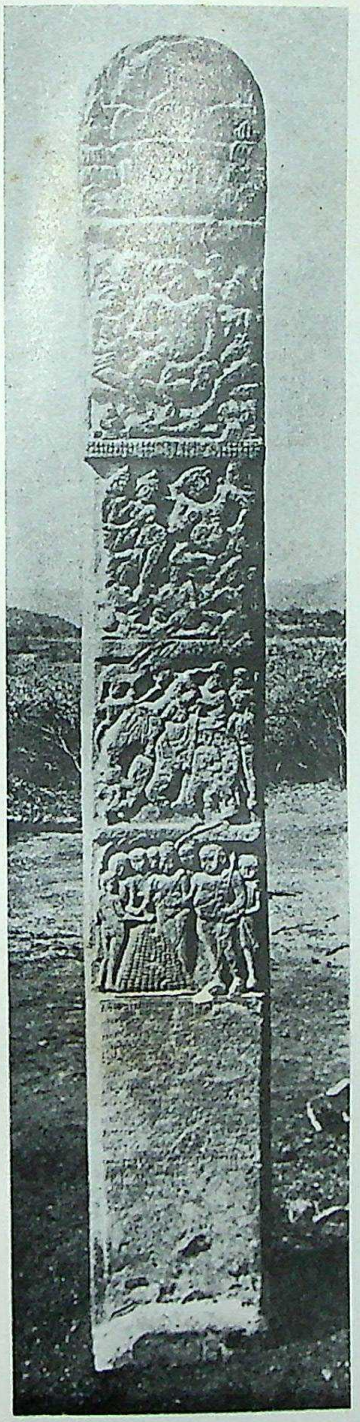

Plate 31. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Memorial pillar of Cāṁtamūla I. *c.* second quarter of third century A.D.

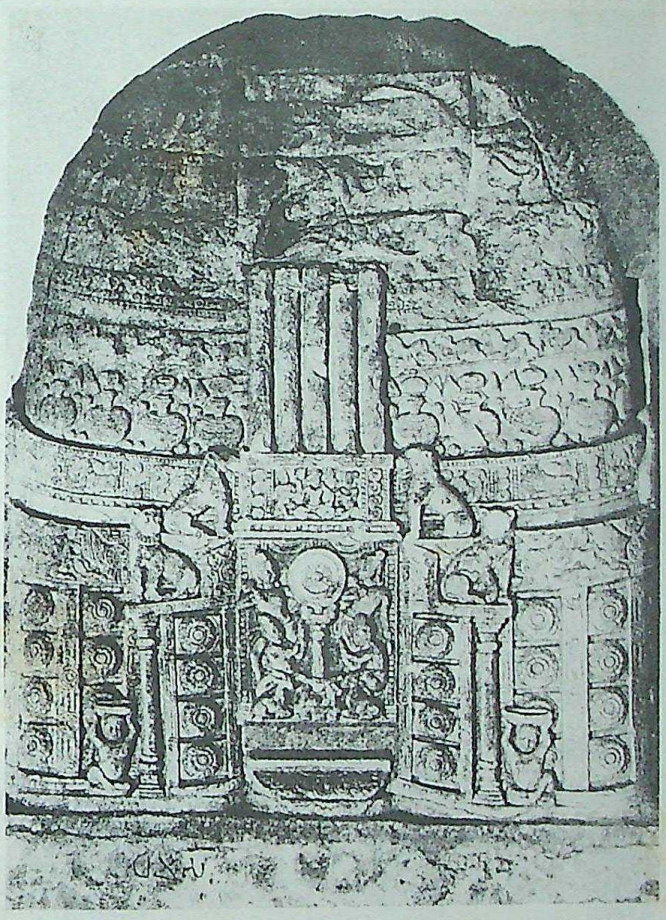

Plate 32. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. *Stūpa* casing slab with inscription Dhamasa. *c.* third century A.D.

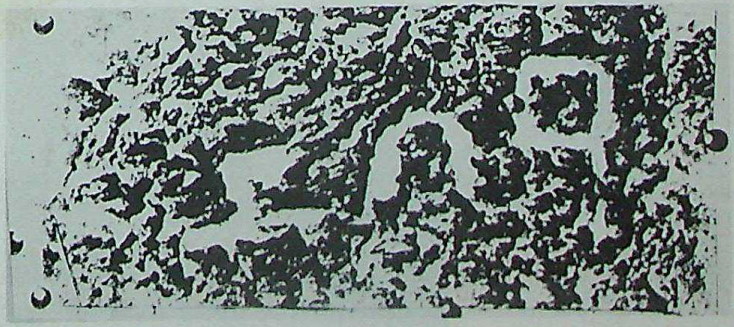

Plate 33. Amarāvatī. Inscription Nāgabu. *c.* second century A.D.

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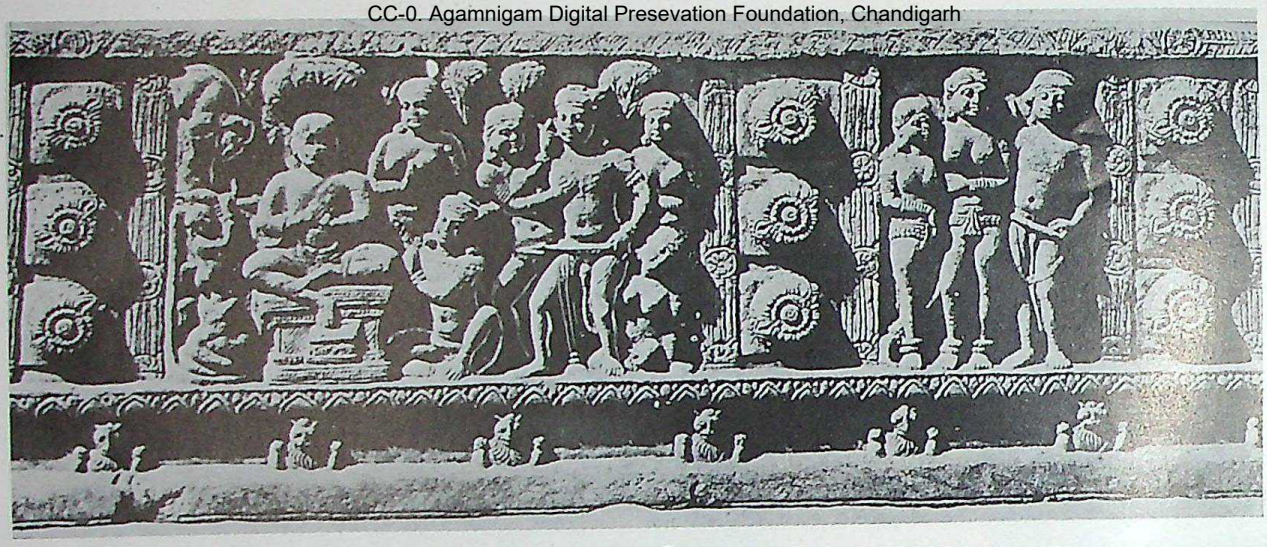

Plate 34. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Conversion of Yakṣa Āḷavaka. *c.* third quarter of third century A.D.

Plate 35. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Inscribed conch shell.
c. last quarter of third century A.D.

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Plate 36. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Memorial pillar set up by Rudrapuruṣadatta. Dated 297 A.D.

Plate 37. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. *Stūpa* casing slab. From Site No. 3, *c.* third century A.D.

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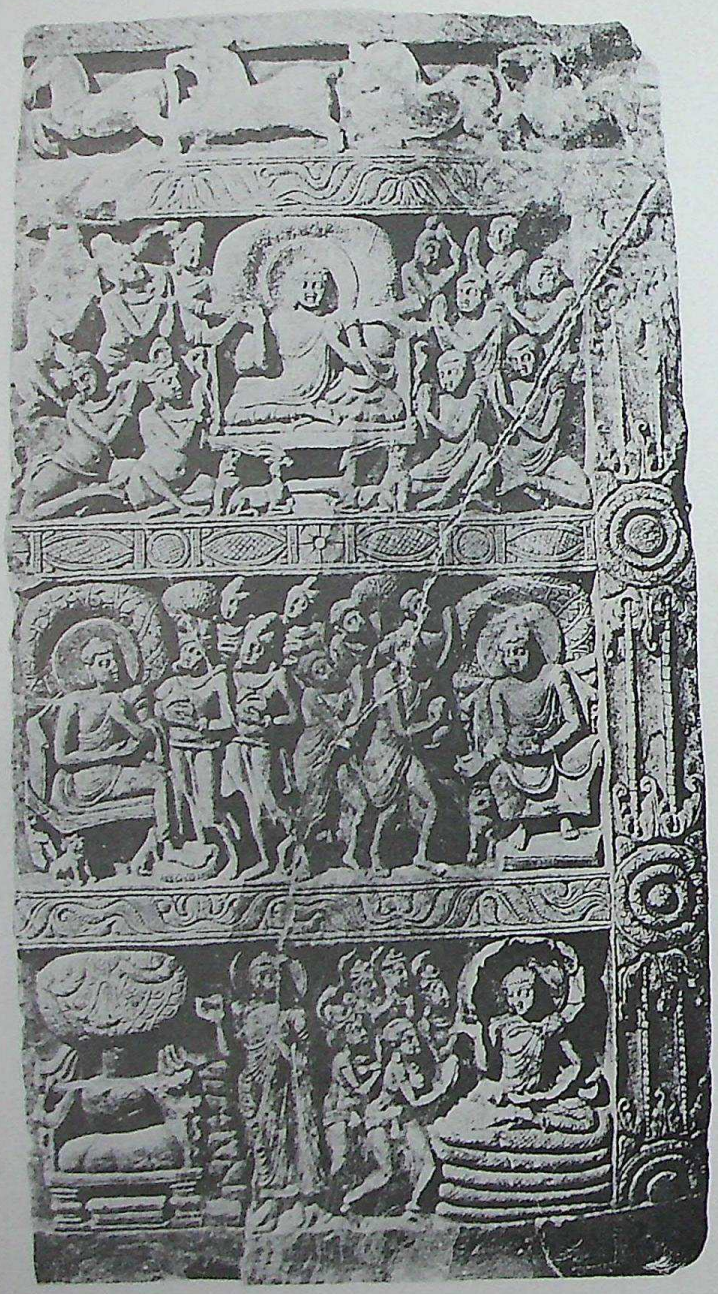

Plate 38. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Upright. From Site No. 2, *c.* third century A.D.

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Plate 40. Detail of Plate 39.

Plate 39. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Memorial pillar of queen Vammabhaṭṭā. Dated 11th regnal year of king Rudrapuruṣadatta, early 4th century A.D. Archaeological Museum, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

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Plate 41. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Detail of memorial pillar of king Cāṁtamūla I. Dated in the year "vijaya" of king Vīrapuruṣadatta. Archaeological Museum, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

Plate 42. Amarāvatī. Drum slab. 3rd centuryA.D. British Museum. (Courtesy: British Museum.)

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Plate 43. Detail of Plate 42 showing scene from the *Saundarananda*.

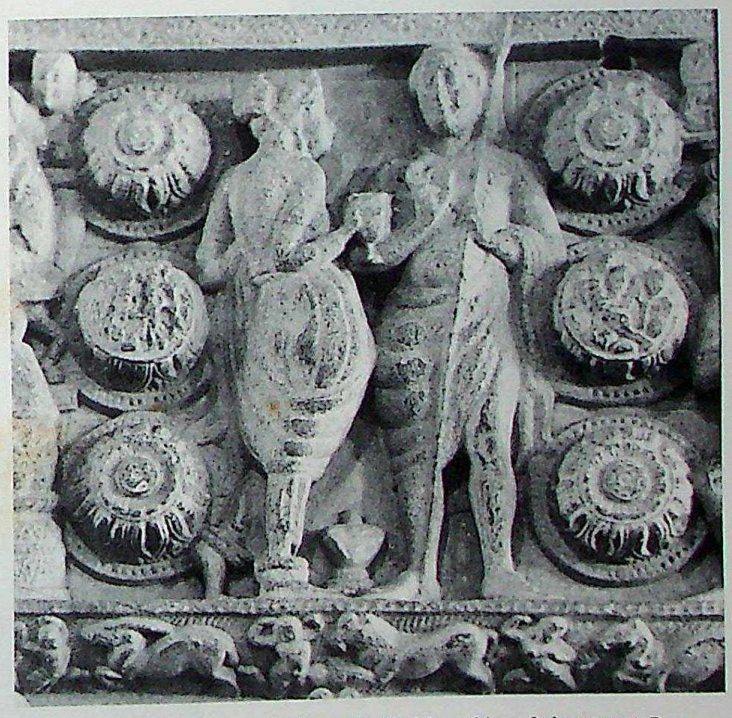

Plate 44. Amarāvatī. *Mithuna*, detail of drum frieze. 3rd century A.D. Madras Government Museum.

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Plate 45. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Guardian figure, detail of pillar. 3rd century A.D. National Museum. New Delhi.

Plate 46. Tarentum. Venus at her toilet, silver mirror case. British Museum. (Courtesy: British Museum.)

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NOTES

1. Dougles Barrett. *Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum*, London 1954, p. 42. He says:

> The latest pillar in the Museum (Pls. XXIX and XXXI) stands at the very beginning of the Nagarjunakonda style. It would not perhaps be entirely without meaning to apply here the categories into which the history of European art is made to fall, and to speak of archaic, classical and mannerist phases at Amaravati and baroque at Nagarjunakonda.

2. The Amarāvatī tradition did not die out after Barrett's "Late Phase" or Sivaramamurti's "Fourth Phase" (A.D. 200–250). For the latter author's views, *see, Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum*, Madras 1956. See, H. Sarkar and S.P. Nainar, *Amaravati*, New Delhi 1972, for different periods of the Amarāvatī *stūpa*.

3. It closely follows D.C. Sircar's chronology which is as follows: Śivaśrī Sātakarṇi, *c.* 160–66; Śivaskanda Sātakarṇi, *c.* 167–173; Yajña Sātakarṇi, *c.* 174–202; Vijaya Sātakarṇi, *c.* 203–08; Caṇḍa Sātakarṇi, *c.* 209–18. After the last-mentioned, King Puḷumāvi, who is sometimes called Puḷumāvi IV, ruled for seven years. *See* D.C. Sircar, *The Successors of the Satavahanas in Lower Deccan*, Calcutta 1939, pp. 162–63. According to K. Gopalachari's chronology, Siri Yajña covers a period from *c.* 160–89; *cf.* his chapter in K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. II, Calcutta 1957, pp. 322–23.

4. Sivaramamurti, *Amaravati Sculptures*, pp. 164 ff.

5. H. Sarkar, "Some Early Inscriptions in the Amaravati Museum," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. IV, pts. 1–2 (1970–71), pp. 1–13. This is the earliest known Sanskrit inscription from Āndhradeśa. Unfortunately, the inscription is much defaced.

6. He held sway at least over some parts of coastal Āndhra till his twenty-seventh regnal year as is evident from his inscription from China. *See* G. Bühler, "A New Inscription of the Andhra King Yajñśrī Gautamīputra," *E.I.*, Vol. I (1892), pp. 95–96.

7. Sircar, *Successors of Satavahanas*, p. 162. V.V. Mirashi, in his latest book on Sātavāhanas and Western Kṣatrapas (in Marāṭhī, 1979, pp. 35–36) has pointed out that Māḍharīputra Śakasena followed Yajña Sātakarṇi on the throne and that he was probably the son of the latter. Śakasena was followed by Vijaya Sātakarṇi who like Yajña Sātakarṇi, had the title Gautamīputra and hence was probably his brother.

8. H. Krishna Sastri, "The Kodavali Rock-Inscription of Chandasati; the Second Year of Reign," *E.I.*, Vol. XVIII (1925–26), pp. 316–19. The second year of this king began in December, 210 A.D.

9. H. Sarkar, "Nagarjunakonda Prakrit Inscription of Gautamiputra Vijaya Satakarni, Year," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVI (1965–66). pp. 273–74. It is significant to note that Gautamīputra is also the matronym of Yajña Sātakarṇi, the immediate predecessor of Vijaya, in accordance with the *Purāṇic* evidence.

10. V.S. Sukthankar, "A New Andhra Inscription of Siri-Pulumavi." *E.I.*, Vol. XIV (1921–22), pp. 153–54. According to the author he is Puḷumāvi (IV) who came to throne in *c.* 218 A.D. His matronym is not known.

11. The numismatic evidence tends to show the presence of other rulers like Rudra Sātakarṇi. Śrī Rudra Sātakarṇi's coins are confined to the Chanda region. See E.J. Rapson, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, the Western Ksatrapas, the Traikutaka Dynasty and the "Bodhi" Dynasty*, London 1908.

12. J.Ph. Vogel, "Prakrit Inscriptions from a Buddhist Site at Nagarjunakonda." *E.I.*, Vol. XX (1920–30). p. 22. The actual expression is *Siripavate Vijayapuriya-puva-disa-bhage*. Vijayapurī is mentioned in some other inscriptions also.

13. The theory that the Ikṣvāku capital was called Vijayapurī probably for its foundation in the cyclic year Vijaya (*E.I.*, Vol. XXXV, 1963–64, p. 2) is too far-fetched. Equally untenable is Sircar's Ikṣvāku chronology based on the cyclic era.

14. Mohd. Abdul Waheed Khan, *A Buddhist Stupa at Kesanapalli (District Guntur, Andhra Pradesh)*, Hyderabad 1969.

15. S. Sankaranarayana, "Rentala Pillar Inscription of Siri Chantamula I, year 5," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVII (1967–68). p. 29–32.

16. *Aga-pogalasa*=Sanskrit *agrya-pudgala*, an epithet of the Buddha.

17. D.C. Sircar, "More Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV (1963–64). pp. 13–17.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 14. Sircar states that the "Characters

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are similar to those in the other records but their size is bigger," and the "elongation of the letter is less prominent in this record."

19. J.Ph. Vogel, "Additional Prakrit Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXI (1955–56), p. 63. The photograph of the memorial column has also been published here. Sircar reëdited the inscription in *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV (1963–64), pp. 1–4.

20. Vogel, "Prakrit Inscriptions," p. 17.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23. At Site 64, the most extensive Brahmanical site at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, occurs the inscription Vidhikasa along with the bow-and-arrow symbol, all inscribed in the undressed part of pillars. *See* H. Sarkar, "Chronological Aspects of Masons' Marks from Nagarjunakonda," *Bhāratī*, Nos. 12–14 (1968–71).

22. Barrett, *Amaravati Sculptures*, p. 44.

23. Inscriptions dated up to twenty-fourth regnal year have been discovered both for Vīrapuruṣadatta and Ehuvala, while the last known date of Rudrapuruṣadatta is fourteen. Cāṁtamūla seems to have ruled for about a quarter of a century since it must have taken time for him to perform so many sacrifices like the *Aśvamedha, Agnistome*, and *Vajapeya*. The chronology followed by R. Subrahmanyam in his *A Catalogue of the Ikshvaku Coins in the Andhra Pradesh Govt. Museum*, Hyderabad 1962, pp. 7 ff., and Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya in his *Coins and Currency Systems in South India (c. A.D. 225–1300)*, Delhi 1977, p. 9, does not differ substantially. It is, however, very different from D.C. Sircar's new chronology based on the supposed reading of the Vijaya as the cyclic era. *See* Sircar, "More Inscriptions," pp. 2 and 4.

24. Sircar, "More Inscriptions," pp. 7–10.

25. *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunakonda, Madras Presidency*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 54, Calcutta 1938, Pls. XXX a and b, XXXI a–c, and XVIII b.

26. Sircar, "More Inscriptions," pp. 11–13.

27. H. Sarkar and B.N. Misra, *Nagarjunakonda*, New Delhi 1972, p. 47. Also Longhurst, *Buddhist Antiquities of Nagarjunakonda*; and T.N. Ramachandran, *Nagarjunakonda 1938*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 72, New Delhi 1953.

28. Sircar, "Nagarjunakonda Inscriptions of the Time of Vasushera, Year 30," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–62), p. 203.

29. *Indian Archaeology 1958–59—A Review*, Pl. V, B.

30. Sarkar and Misra, *Nagarjunakonda*, p. 50.

31. *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 202.

32. *Indian Archaeology 1974–75—A Review*, p. 50. It has been ascribed to the Period III (first-third century A.D.). A masonry tank of the Śunga-kuṣāṇa period has been uncovered also at Śṛṇgaverapur in Uttar Pradesh.

33. Sarkar and Misra, *Nagarjunakonda*, pp. 24–29.

34. D.C. Sircar and K.G. Krishnan "Two Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda" *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–62), p. 19. The relevant passage reads as follows: *bhagavato (taḥ) Puspabhadrasvāminaḥ devakulaṁ kāritaṁ dhvajastaṁbha pratiṣṭhāpitāḥ.*

35. B.Ch. Chhabra, "Nagarjunakonda Inscriptions of Ehavalasri's Time, Year 11," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIII (1959–60), p. 149. It reads; prāsādaṁ = Gāṇḍi-puttras=*satalavara-varah=Kārttikeya-p-prasādāt. . . .*

36. Sircar. "More inscriptions," p. 7, *Bhagavato (Noḍagi?) sarasāmisa devakula sthala* [*ca kāri*] *ta.*

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6

A Dated Memorial Pillar from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa

ELIZABETH S. ROSEN

THE SITE OF Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in Andhra Pradesh has yielded the sculptural remains of a large Buddhist community which dwelt there during the third and fourth centuries A.D. Built under the patronage of the Ikṣvāku Dynasty, immediate successors of the Sātavāhanas, the artists of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa continued the sculptural tradition of Amarāvatī, varying and expanding upon both the stylistic and iconographic repertory of their predecessors. As at Amarāvatī, the actually dated sculptures are few in number. At Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, there seem to be only four regnally dated pieces, and due to problems of both Sātavāhana and Ikṣvāku chronology, only approximate calendrical dates for the sculptures may be given.

Of the inscribed and dated sculptural pieces from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, the one I discuss is the latest, dating to the eleventh regnal year of the fourth king of the Ikṣvāku Dynasty, Rudrapuruṣadatta. Although this work is in a poor state of preservation, I intend to demonstrate that the sculptural traditions of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, through its latest dated work, were still in adherence to the compositional norms set up at Amarāvatī over a century and a half earlier. Further, the sculptors of both Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa were keenly aware of imported objects and styles from the West. From the finds at Begram[1] and Brahmapuri,[2] as well as from evidence from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa,[3] it is known that Western luxury goods were imported into India. Such objects have actually been represented on the Buddhist narrative art of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. With the import of these objects came the development of new techniques, especially in the art of terracotta manufacture.[4] These objects imported from the West had a direct influence upon compositions in Buddhist narrative reliefs from Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, and that this influence was at its height from the latest phases of the art of Amarāvatī right through the early part of the fourth century A.D.

The result of this influence is evident in the latest dated work from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, a pillar (Plate 39) first reported in *Indian Archaeology, A Review 1955–1956*[5] as having come from Site XIII at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (now called Site 24 by H. Sarkar).[6] It was found in a votive *stūpa* opposite a *caitya gṛha*. The pillar records a complete genealogy of the Ikṣvāku kings, and was dedicated in the eleventh regnal year of the fourth and last known king, Rudrapuruṣadatta, i.e. in the early part of the fourth century A.D.[7] According to the inscription, it was raised as a memorial pillar to a deceased queen Varmabhaṭṭā, stepmother of king Rudrapuruṣadatta. Varmabhaṭṭā, is further stated to have been the daughter of a Mahākṣatrapa of the Bṛhatphalāyana *gotra*, thus showing a second instance of an Ikṣvāku marital alliance with *kṣatrapas* of Western India.

As the pillar was found in a Buddhist monastic complex, naturally a Buddhist interpretation was suggested first. The main figure (Plate 40) was called Prajāpatī Gotamī, foster mother of Buddha, holding

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the Buddha as a child in a scarf.[8] Subsequently, D.C. Sircar and K.G. Krishnan[9] reinterpreted the sculpture as representing none other than the deceased queen Varmabhaṭṭā, dressed as the foreigner she indeed was. The deceased queen is represented at her toilet holding a mirror and accompanied by two other figures. Portrait sculpture on a memorial pillar is indeed the logical identification, and a precedent for it had already been well established at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

In the earliest memorial pillar at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, that bearing the well-known pillar inscription L (Plate 41), the deceased king, Cāmtamūla I is described as *hiraṇyakoṭidāna* or "giver of crores of gold".[10] As M. Rama Rao has suggested, the bottom sculptural panel of the memorial pillar represents just that aspect of the king's deeds.[11] The dominant corpulent figure, with the umbrella over his head would obviously be the king. His right hand is placed on a water pot, thus indicating a donation. In the center of the composition is the mound of gold which the king is giving away.

Although it seems relatively simple to represent a king in a heroic or generous act, there is no clear convention, at this time, for representing a deceased queen.[12] It is known that many of the queens at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa were active supporters of the Buddhist faith, and for their support, they expected to gain merit or even *nirvāṇa*.[13] About queen Varmabhaṭṭā, there is no such concrete information; but, the find spot of the pillar may indicate that the lady was at least sympathetic to Buddhism.

In the realm of Buddhist art, the closest comparison to the representation on the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar is the well-known palimpest in the British Museum (Plate 42) belonging to the late phase of the art of Amarāvatī. As the nearby Amarāvatī *stūpa* was still in worship during all the sculptural activity at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, this would be the most likely source for the composition of the memorial pillar. In a small panel (Plate 43) representing a scene from the conversion of Nanda,[14] his lovely wife Sundarī, accompanied by an attendant holding a mirror in front of her is seen in contrast, Varmabhaṭṭā holds the mirror herself. Sundarī is surrounded by numerous attendants, here reduced to one in the representation of Varmabhaṭṭā. However, in spite of some obvious visual similarities, the theme of the *Saundarananda*, with the completely negative light in which it casts the vain wife Sundarī, would hardly be a suitable source for a memorial pillar, presumably intended to elevate the memory of the dead queen Varmabhaṭṭā. For in the *Saundarananda*, Sundarī is referred to as the "darkness which is called wife."[15]

Rather than proposing that the scene from the *Saundarananda* was the compositional source for the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar, I wish to suggest that both works were independently developed from a common Classical prototype or prototypes, even though the two works may have been done over a hundred years apart. There was active trade between India and the Classical West. Just when this trade ceased is not clear, but the Roman amphorae,[16] as well as Roman coins were found during the Ikṣvāku phase at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.[17] Objects similar to those found at Begram in Afghanistan have been represented in the art of Amarāvatī,[18] while similar comparisons may be seen between Roman objects and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa reliefs. The existence of what appears to be an arena, or perhaps a Classical *bouletarion* (a rectangular stepped assembly hall) at Nāgārjunakoṇḍā[19] seems to indicate an Ikṣvāku receptiveness to certain Western notions. In terms of sculptural relief, unlike in the art of Gandhāra, this receptiveness was received upon a foundation of Buddhist narrative art which was already over four centuries old. Thus, in case of a *mithuna* couple in Roman style dress on a late Amarāvatī drum frieze (Plate 44), the Roman style figure has been imposed on an already pre-existing Indian concept. In another vein, one wonders if the well-known Scythian type guardian figure, represented on a pillar from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Plate 45), is a borrowing from Kushan art, or from reality, or from both; the contemporary Tamil text, the *Śilppadikāram*, in speaking of the region of Madurai, refers to the "best Yavana swordsmen" who acted as guards.[20]

To return to the question of the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar, this Classical influence lasted through the end of the Ikṣvāku tradition. Objects found at Brahmapuri give an excellent notion of the type of objects imported from the Classical world into India. For example, a small mirror case representing Perseus and Andromeda,[21] probably produced in the workshops of Alexandria, has been found at Brahmapuri. In a discussion of this piece, Karl Khandalavala cites comparative examples in the British Museum, stating that such mirrors were in demand in India, and local copies were made of them.[22] This is indisputable as they have been clearly represented on sculptures from both Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.[23] One of

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the comparative Classical mirrors which Khandalavala cites is this small mirror case representing the Toilet of Venus, now in the British Museum (Plate 46).[24] Below the central figure of Venus is the small figure of Cupid, and opposite her is a servant-like figure on a pedestal. The mirror cited by Khandalavala is indeed pertinent to this argument, as a composition such as this one must have served as the prototype for the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar. Both show the central figure of a lady at her toilet. The small figure of Cupid, becomes in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa relief, a female as would be suited to the private quarters of queen Varmabhaṭṭā. The Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar is, in fact, closer to the Classical inspiration than it is to the Amarāvatī conversion of Nanda, indicating that Classical objects of this nature must have been in constant use during the Ikṣvāku period at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. The notion that the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar is based on a Venus composition is fairly certain, as the small *putto* placed beneath the seated female figure is a standard representation of Venus known throughout the Classical world, as can be seen in a second-century Roman sarciphagus composition of Venus and Adonis (Plate 47), as well as in numerous other examples.[25] Such sarciphagus compositions were not seen directly by the Indian artists. They seem to have been copied onto the more portable luxury goods, and in that form, transmitted to India. The mode of transmission into the art of Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa was probably not indirect, for example, via the art of Gandhāra. More likely, objects entered through the well-known ports of Western India and/or of Maisolia in Andhra Pradesh, and reached Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in the same way they reached Brahmapuri and Ter.[26] Most likely, there was a good store of Classical objects at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa which is now lost to us.

Why was Queen Varmabhaṭṭā represented as a figure of Venus? It is indeed possible that the queen herself owned such a mirror and that the composition appealed to the artist. On the other hand, the pillar itself was found within a Buddhist monastic complex and many of the royal women of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa were known to be supporters of Buddhism. Thus the sculpture representing the figure of the Queen at her toilet looking in a mirror, inspired by a Classical composition, also might have been imbued with a Buddhist meaning. Since I have already eliminated the *Saundarananda* as a clear source for the subject matter, I admit now to be entering into the realm of pure speculation. However, a series of articles on mirrors and their associated symbolism has been quite suggestive.[27] In them, Alex Wayman states that "Buddhism takes prestigious and imposing symbols of secular life and transforms them into religious symbols."[28] Interpreting a passage from the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, Wayman refers to the necessity of obliterating one's image in the mirror, because the image in the mirror is the projection of the phenomenal world.[29] In later texts, Wayman has found that the obliteration of the image is a symbolic death, or even an actual omen of death (*i.e.* the disappearance of the phenomenal world).[30] Such an interpretation would be most suitable to a memorial pillar, but must be considered independently from the compositional source.

Although a chronology for the late art of Amarāvatī is only known in a general way, it seems clear that Classical compositional sources found their way into the illustration of Buddhist *stūpas* in Āndhra Pradesh, and in this case, a memorial pillar. The preponderance of these observed so far occurs from the beginning of the third century A.D. through the early part of the fourth century A.D. As already cited above, conspicuous examples from Amarāvatī are on the late phase drum friezes showing the typical *mithuna* couples of the Āndhra *stūpas* here in Classical dress and pose, and on the British Museum palimpest showing Sundarī, wife of Nanda at her toilet, taken from the Classical composition of Venus. Another noteworthy example is found at both Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and involves the well-known Śibi Jātaka,[31] recounting the sacrifice of the king's flesh in exchange for the freedom of a dove. In the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa example (Plate 48), the posture of king Śibi is taken directly from the figure of Adonis about to be wounded in the thigh (Plate 49). This is the central motif of numerous Roman sarcophagi showing Venus and Adonis. This again is an example of an ancient Indian tale, borrowing a brief motif from a Roman sarcophagus in order best to represent the theme, and again, the borrowing is purely compositional and in no way symbolically or iconographically significant. Further, the borrowing is again from Venus and Adonis, a myth which seems to provide for a number of compositional borrowings.

The use of Classical motifs in the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is indeed quite clear from the sculptural reliefs. But one more piece of evidence helps to

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confirm the great interest in Roman objects known to the Ikṣvākus. A small group of terracotta pendants were excavated at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Plate 50). These pendants seem to have been made in molds, and some of them were copies of Roman coins. Most likely, they were intended to be hung on a string and were worn around the neck. Their more expensive counterpart exists in the form of two gold pendants showing Roman type portraiture, which were excavated at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa during the early part of this century.[32] The fact that Roman coins were copied not only in gold, but also in a less expensive material, further indicates the extreme popularity of these imported forms in various spheres of the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

Although Classical influence in the art of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is a subject which is in itself of great interest, the implication of this influence goes beyond the site itself. In Andhra Pradesh, passages from the Classical world appear in traditional Indian narrative art inherited from the indigenous traditional of Bhārhut, Sāñchī, and Amarāvatī itself. The Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar, because of its dated inscription, shows that such passages continue into the fourth century A.D. The whole notion of the mixture of Andhra Classical style, combined with Classical motifs, has been seen in the ivories from Begram in Afghanistan. Here again, on Coffert IX from Begram (Plate 51), Venus is seen as seated at her toilet, in traditional Indian style surrounded by clearly Classical motifs. The late date of the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar helps to confirm that these hybrid compositions persisted in India at least through the early part of the fourth century A.D. and perhaps even later. Many of the passages of Classical influence which one might guess to be of the second century A.D. survive easily into the fourth century. Thus the date of the Rudrapuruṣadatta pillar of the dead Queen Varmabhaṭṭā-cum-Venus is another support for the late date of Coffert IX at Begram.[34]

NOTES

1. J. Hackin, *Recherches archéologiques à Begram*, (Memoires de la délégation archéologique francaise en Afghanistan, tome IX), Paris 1939. Vol. II, Pls. IV-XXVII; J. Hackin, *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Begram*, (Memoires de la délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan, tome XI), Paris 1954, Vol. II, Figs. 250–358.

2. K. Khandalavala, "Brahmapuri: A Consideration of the Metal Objects Found in the Kundangar Hoard," *Lalit Kalā*, Vol. VII (1960), pp. 56–62.

3. *Ibid.*, Pl. XV, Fig. 12, Pl. XXV, Fig. 59, and p. 69.

4. M.N. Deshpande, "Classical Influence on Indian Terracotta Art," *Huitième congrès international d'archéologie classique*, Paris 1965, pp. 606 ff; E. Rosen, "The Begram Ivories," *Marsyas*, Vol. XVII (1974–1975), p. 42.

5. *Indian Archaeology, A Review, 1955-1956*, p. 24.

6. H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India*, Delhi 1966, p. 81 and Pl. XIII.

7. For varying opinions concerning the precise dates of Ikṣvāku chronology, see K. Krishna Murthy, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa: A Cultural Study*, Delhi 1977, pp. 7–8; M. Rama Rao, *Ikṣvākus of Vijayapurī*, Tirupati 1967, pp. 17–22; D.C. Sircar, "More Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV (1963–1964), pp. 1–6; R. Subrahmanyam, *A Catalogue of the Ikṣvāku Coins in the Andhra Pradesh Government Museum* (Andhra Pradesh Government Museum Series, No. 5), Hyderabad 1965, p. 7. See also contribution by H. Sarkar in this volume.

8. See footnote 5.

9. D.C. Sircar and K.G. Krishnan, "Two Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–1962), pp. 20–22.

10. J.Ph. Vogel, "Additional Prakrit Inscriptions from Nagarjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXI (1930–1931), pp. 63–64.

11. Rao, *Ikṣvākus of Vijayapurī*, pp. 29–30.

12. The recently discovered memorial pillars at the site of Sannati are the only known predecessors to the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa memorial pillars. See contributions by M.S. Nagaraja Rao in this volume.

13. See, for example, *āyaka* pillar inscription C 3 in J.Ph. Vogel, "Prakrit Inscriptions from Nāgārjunakonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XX (1929–1930), pp. 15–17. For the significance of these inscriptions see E. Rosen, "Buddhist Architecture and Lay Patronage at

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Nāgārjunakoṇḍa," *The Stupa: Its Religious, Historical, and Architectural Significance*, ed. A.L. Dallapiccola, (Beiträge zur Sudasienforschung: Bd. 55), Wiesbaden 1980, pp. 114–115.

14. D. Barrett, *Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum*, London 1954, Pl. IV and pp. 71–72.

15. Aśvaghoṣa, *Saundarananda*, ed. and trans. E.H. Johnston, New Delhi 1975 (Original edition Lahore 1928), Canto X, 3, p. 54.

16. *Indian Archaeology, A Review, 1957–1958*, p. 9.

17. P.L. Gupta, *Roman Coins from Andhra Pradesh*, (Andhra Pradesh Government Museum Series, No. 10), Hyderabad n.d., pp. 6, 74–75. It has been suggested to me by Dr. Manfred Raschke that one or more of the "Roman" coin finds from Andhra Pradesh might be Indian copies after Roman originals. If this is the case, it strengthens the notion that it was not only fashionable to import, but also to copy Roman originals in Andhra Pradesh.

18. Rosen, "Begram", p. 42, Pl. XIII.

19. H. Sarkar and B.N. Misra, *Nagarjunakonda*, 2nd ed., New Delhi 1972, Pl. II. In form, the closest comparison to the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa structure I have thus far observed is the Greek *bouleterion* at Pryene in Eastern Turkey (R. Martin, *Living Architecture: Greek*, London 1969, Pls. 147–149). Even though the form is similar to the *bouleterion*, it seems that the function was perhaps that of a boxing arena. In a recent seminar on the city of Mathurā (New Delhi, January 1980), Dr. Usha Nilsson cited a Pūraṇic passage describing what seems to have been a very similar structure at Mathurā (*Harivaṁśa*, Viṣnuparva, 26: 30, p. 298). The structure in question was a boxing arena. As there were numerous sculptural representations of boxers at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, it is more than likely that the "arena" had the same function.

20. Ilango-adigal, *The Śilappadikāram*, trans. with introduction and notes by V.R. Ramachandra Rao, Oxford 1939, p. 201. According to Dikshitar, (p. 201, footnote 6), the term *yavana* may be a reference to Greeks. However, he feels that the term applies equally well to all foreigners. Such foreigners were employed by Tamil kings for military service.

In another passage of the *Śilappadikaram* (p. 128) the existence of seaborne trade is cited. In reference to the ancient city of Puhār, the author states:

> In these stretches of white sand can be seen different kinds of goods brought in ships by foreign merchants, who have left their native homes and settled here.

Ancient Puhār is modern Kaveripattinam. The excavations of Buddhist material at that site show that there was an affiliation between the ancient port city and Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (*Indian Archaeology, A Review*, 1964–1965, p. 25, Pls. XVII–XVIII).

The date of the *Śilappadikāram* is a matter of dispute. Although traditionally belonging to the second or third century A.D., Kamil Zvelebil (*Mahfil*, Vol. IV, Nos. 3–4, 1968, pp. 1–12) places it between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the seventh centuries A.D. However, even if the text is late, it seems to represent a historical situation of an earlier time, and remains a good source for South Indian cultural history. See also E. Rosen, Review of Prince Ilangō Adigal, *Shilappadikaram* (*The Ankle Bracelet*) translated by Alain Danielou, in *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 37, Nos. 1–2 (1975), pp. 148–150.

21. Khandalavala, "Brahmapuri," Fig. 7.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

23. For example see Barrett, *Amarāvatī*, Pl. XI; A.H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Madras Presidency* (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 54), Delhi 1938, Pls. XXVIII b, XXXV a.

24. In the early part of the century, the mirror was cited by H.B. Walters as being of Roman workmanship (H.G. Walters, *Catalogue of the Silver Plate (Greek, Etruscan and Roman) in the British Museum*, London 1921, p. 16, No. 71). Later scholarship places it into the Hellenistic period (D.E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Silver Plate*, London 1966, p. 104, Pl. 29B). Although the date of the mirror seems still open to question, its precise date is, in this instance, not crucial to our argument. For it is this type of representation which must have been seen in India, not this specific example.

25. See C. Robert, *Die Antiken Sarkophag Reliefs*, Vol. 3, No 1, *Einzelmythen*, Rome 1969, Pl. 2. Figs. 3, 4, 5, 10.

26. Khandalavala, "Brahmapuri," pp. 49 ff.; D. Barrett, *Ter*, Bombay 1960, pp. 3–5.

27. A. Wayman, "A Jotting on the Mirror: Those of Ladies," *Mahfil*, Vol. VII (1971), pp. 209–212; "Mirror-like Knowledge in Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature," *Asiatische Studien*, Vol. 25 (1971), pp. 353–363; "The Mirror as a Pan-Buddhist

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Metaphor-Simile," *History of Religions*, Vol. 13 (1974), pp. 251–269; "Notes of Mirror Words and Entities in the Area of India," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher*, Bd. 47 (1955), pp. 204–206.

28. Wayman, "The Mirror as a Metaphor-Simile," p. 263.

29. *Ibid*. See also U. Wogihara and C. Tsuchida, eds., *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtram*, Tokyo 1936, Chapter 18, verse 62.

30. Wayman, "The Mirror as a Metaphor-Simile," p. 264.

31. For a list of sources for this tale, see D. Schlingloff, "Der Köning Mit Dem Schwert: Die Identifizierung einer Ajantamalerei," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, Vol. 21 (1977), pp. 60–61, footnote 6.

32. Longhurst, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Pl. VI c.

33. The popularity of coin necklaces at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is attested to by their representation on sculptural reliefs. In fact, in the Jaina *Kalpa Sūtra*, such coin necklaces are referred to as *uratthadinaramālāyā*, a string of Dināras on the breast. (Krishna Murthy, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, p. 80, Fig. VI, No. 19.) Even if the coins were not literally fashioned of Roman *denarii*, they once presumably were.

34. Rosen, "Begram," pp. 39–48.

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Plate 47. Rome. Fragment of sarcophagus. Farewell to Adonis. 2nd century A.D. (Courtesy: C. Robert, *Die Antiken Sarkophag-Reliefs*, Vol. III, No. 1, *Einzelmythen*, Rome 1969, Pl. II, No. 10.)

Plate 48. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Śibi *Jātaka*, detail of an *āyaka* frieze. 3rd century A.D. Archaeological Museum, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

Plate 49. Rome. Fragment of a sarcophagus. Wounding of Adonis. 2nd century A.D. (Courtesy: C. Robert, *Die Antiken Sarkophag-Reliefs*, Vol. III, No. 1, *Einzelmythen*, Rome 1969, Pl. II, No. 9.)

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Plate 50. Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Group of clay pendants. 3rd century A.D.
(Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India.)

Plate 51. Begram. Ivory plaques, Coffret IX. 3rd-4th centuries A.D. Kabul Museum. (Courtesy: J. Hackin, *Nouvelles recherches archéologiques à Begram*, Memoires de la délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan, tome, XI, Fig. 233.)

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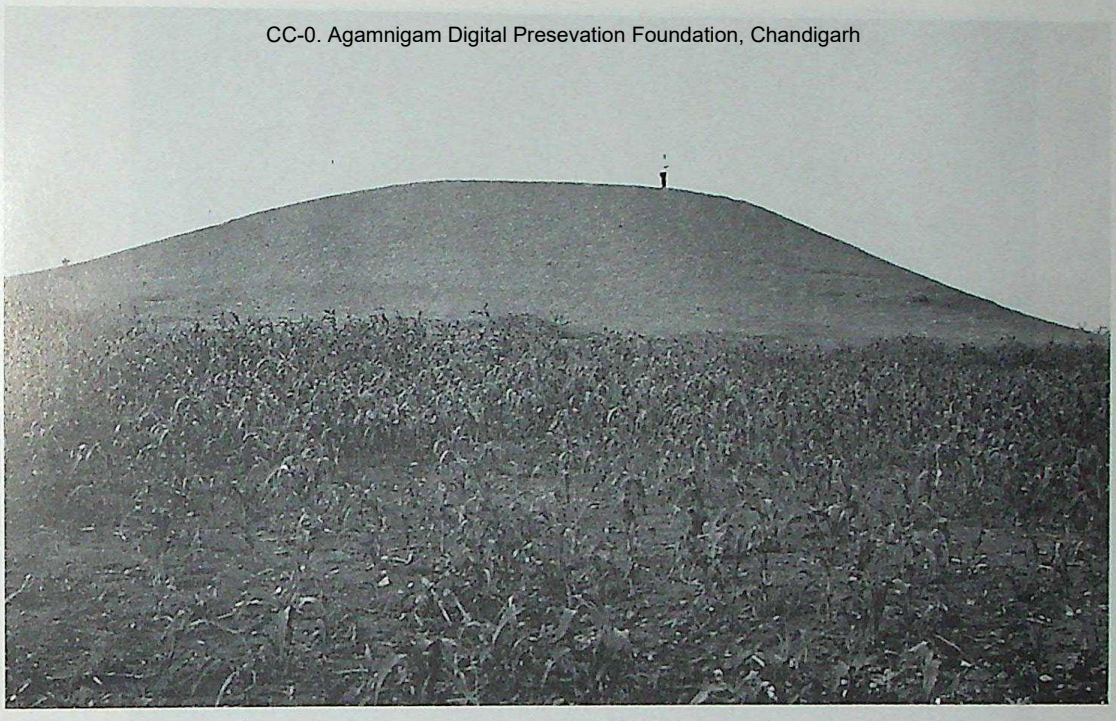

Plate 52. Sannati. *Stūpa*. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 53. Sannati. Terracottas. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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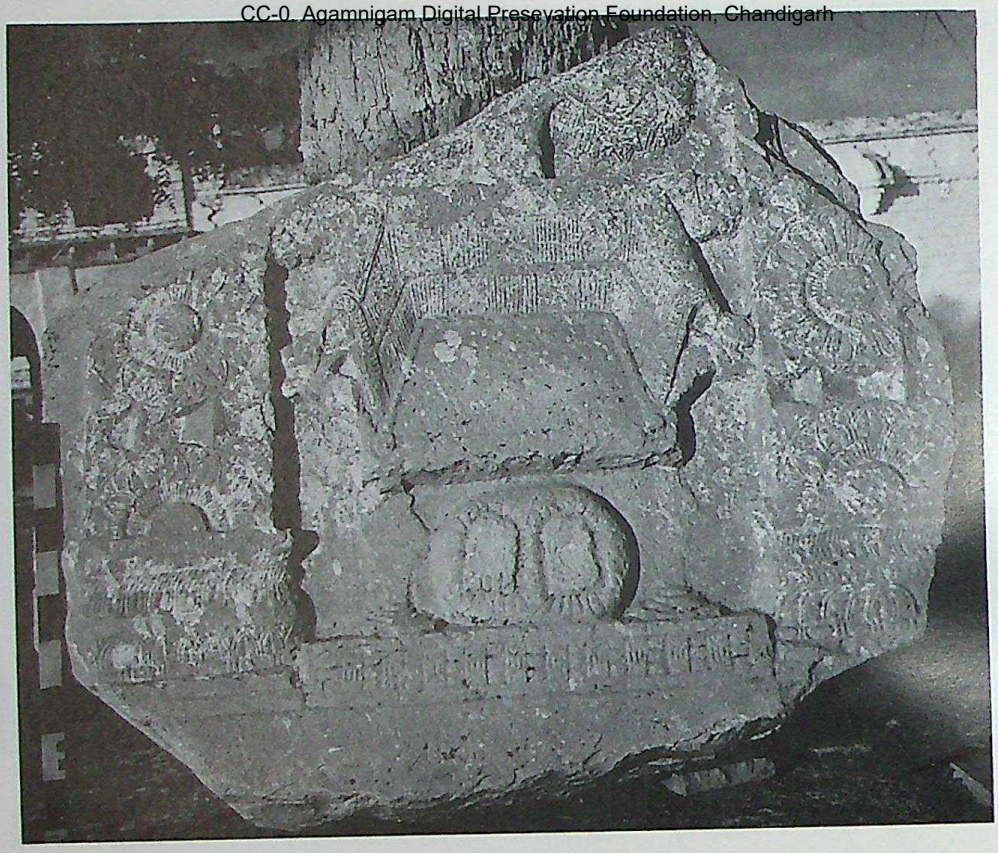

Plate 54. Sannati. Buddhapāda sculpture. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 55. Sannati. Inscription of Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Sātakarṇi.

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Plate 56. Sannati. Inscription of Mahārathiputa. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 57. Sannati. Inscription depicting Rāmasiri, wife of *rājāmātya* Gaganaka. Inscription above the sculpture. 1st-2nd century A.D.

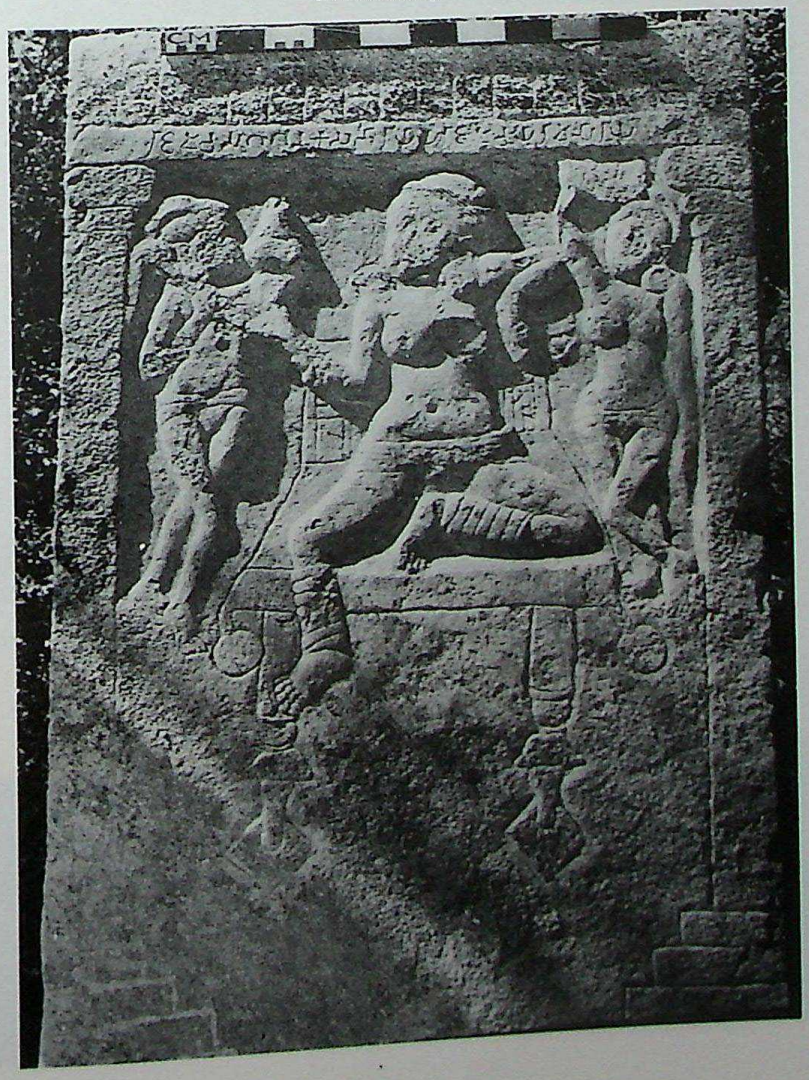

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Plate 58. Sannati. Donative inscription of Govidāsi, the dancer belonging to Budhaśreṇi. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 59. Sannati. Architectural member called *devachadaka* donated by Muka. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 60. Sannati. Donative inscription of Nāgadeva. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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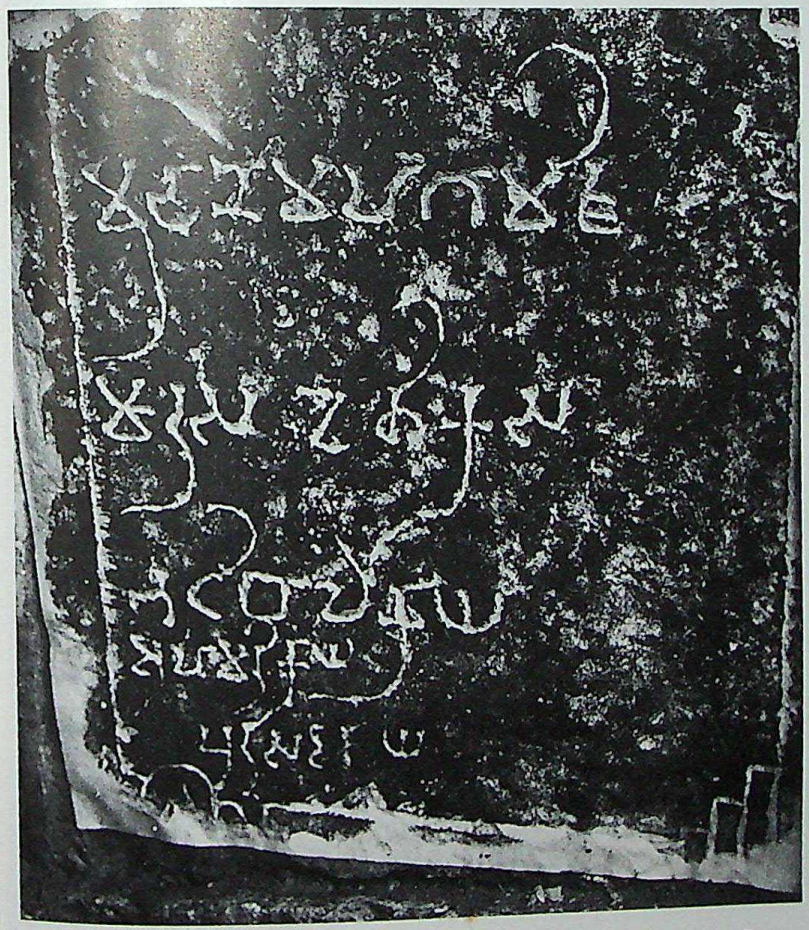

Plate 61. Sannati. Donative inscription of Detika. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 62. Sannati. *Āyaka* pillar.
1st-2nd century A.D.

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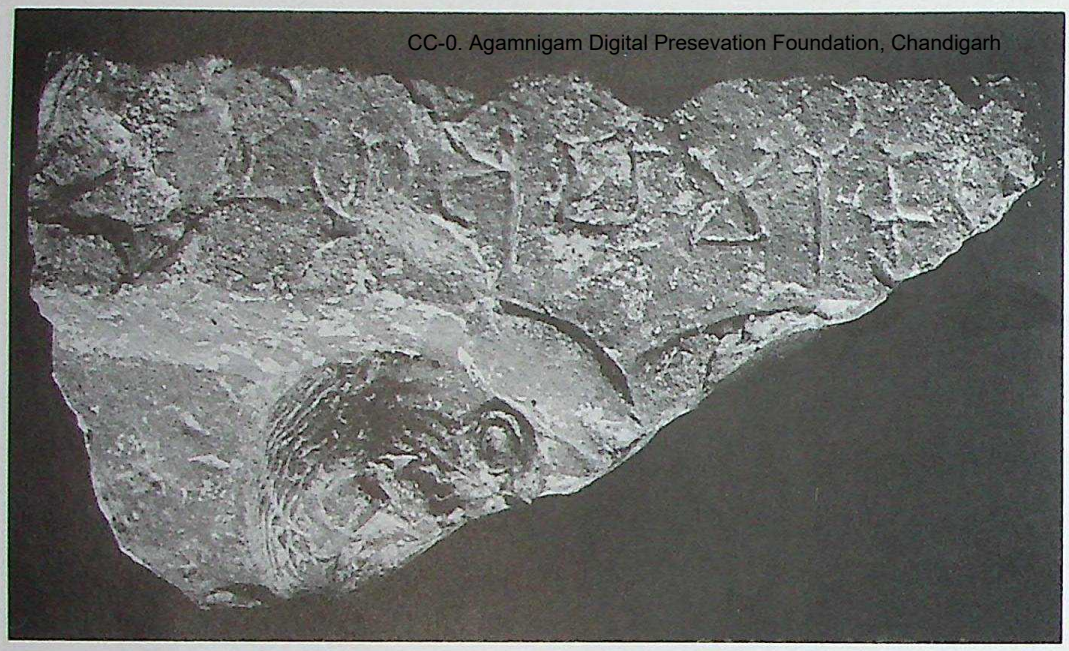

Plate 63. Sannati. Inscription of a Grhiṇī from Ahimarikā. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 64. Sannati. Inscription of Samā, the Grhiṇī. 1st-2nd century A.D.

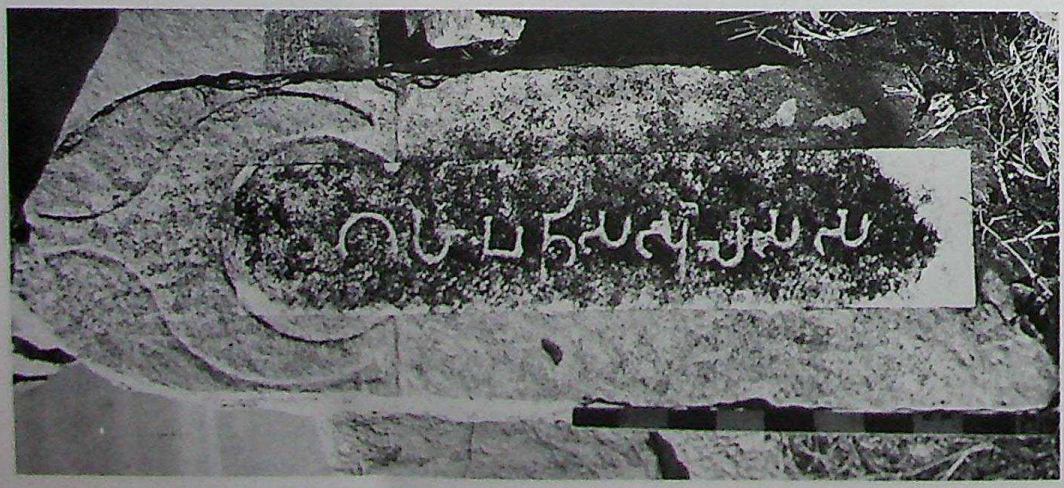

Plate 65. Sannati. Inscription of Sulasa, a householder. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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Plate 66. Sannati. Inscription of Senaṇha, the merchant.
1st-2nd century A.D.

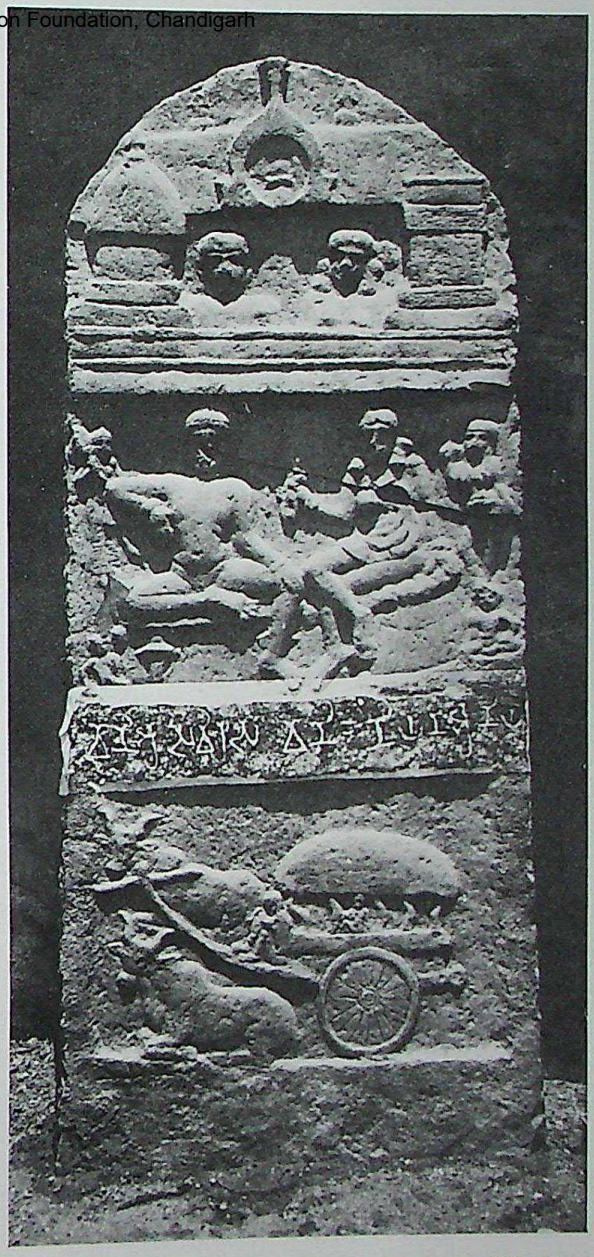

Plate 67. Jevargi. Inscription of Vīra, the merchant and his wife.
1st-2nd century A.D.

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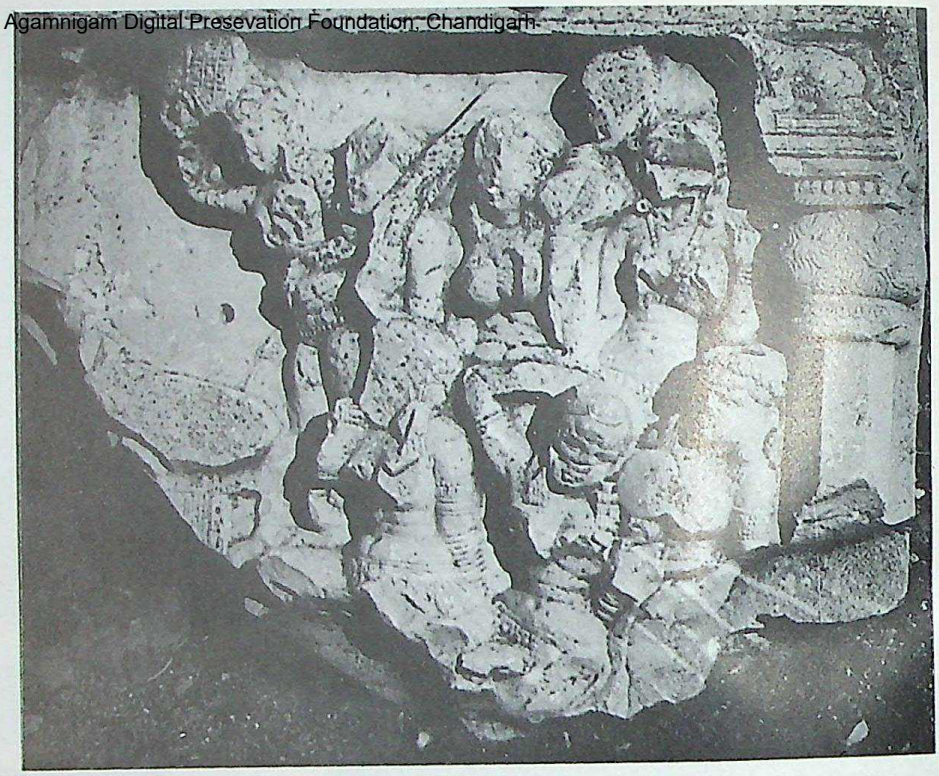

Plate 68. Sannati. Sculptural panel depicting female attendants wearing typical classical hair-do. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 69. Sannati. Detail of two attendants. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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Plate 70. Sannati. Inscription of a Yavaṇikā and Saṃghanikā.
1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 72. Sannati. Inscription of Araka, a donor.
1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 71. Sannati. Inscription of a householder from Simhala.
1st-2nd century A.D.

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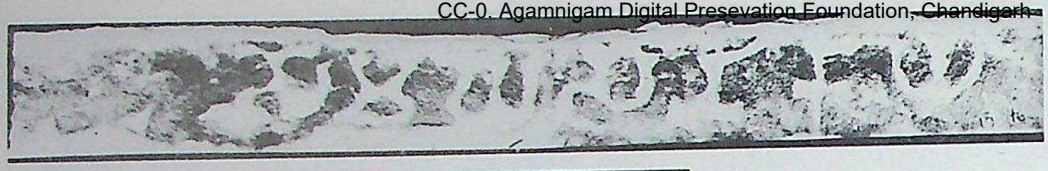

Plate 73. Sannati. Inscription of Somaghosanīkā, a donor. 1st-2nd century A.D.

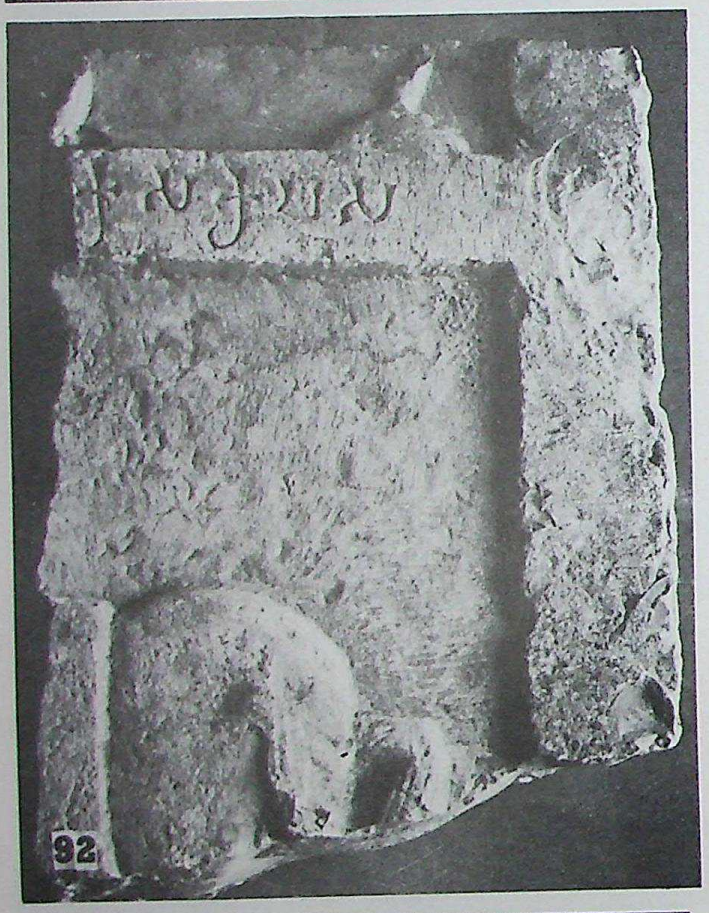

Plate 74. Sannati. Inscription of Samkapa, a donor. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 75. Sannati. Inscription of Muḍāṇi. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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Plate 76. Sannati. Inscription mentioning the shadow figure of Atisaya. 1st-2nd century A.D.

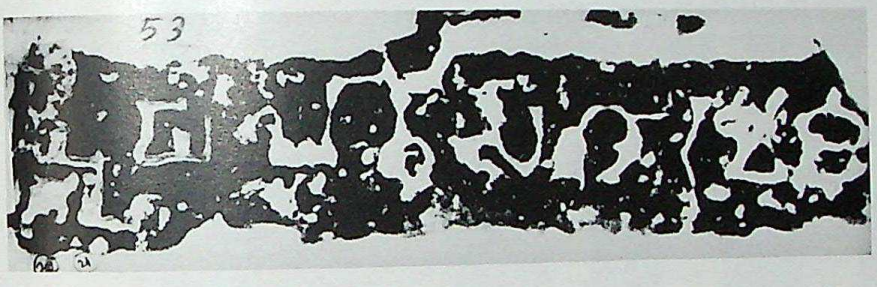

Plate 77. Sannati. Inscription mentioning *ghāli* Visākha. 1st-2nd century A.D.

Plate 78. Sannati. Inscription mentioning Salonaka. 1st-2nd century A.D.

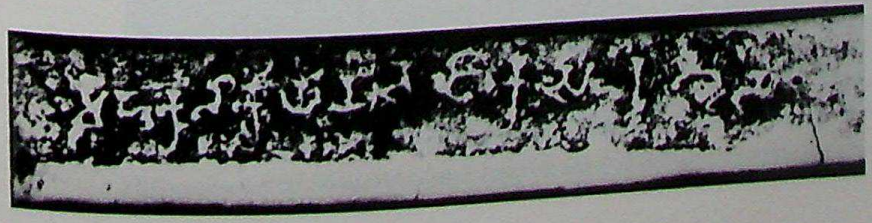

Plate 79. Hippargi. Inscription of Rakṣita. 1st-2nd century A.D.

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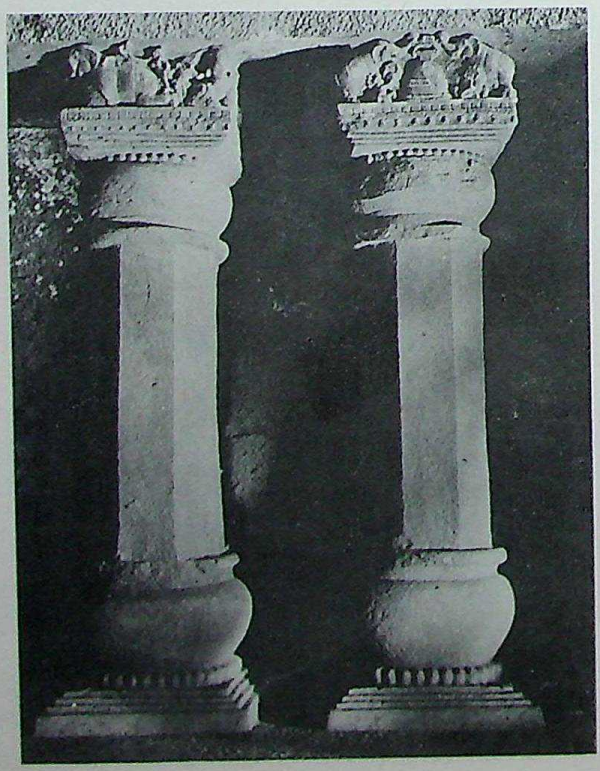
Plate 84. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), interior view.

Plate 85. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), pillars.



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7

Brāhmī Inscriptions and Their Bearing on the Great Stūpa at Sannati

M.S. NAGARAJA RAO

AMONG THE MOST spectacular discoveries in Karnataka in recent years is the Buddhist site of Sannati, in the Citapur Taluka of Gulbarga District. The site was discovered by S. Nagaraju, then of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in Karnataka. It is located on the left bank of the river Bhīmā. Sannati has three important early historic sites, two of them habitation sites. The third one is a *stūpa* site, very rich in antiquities such as terracottas (Plate 53), coins and beads. There is also a fortification constructed with typical Sātavāhana bricks. This probably is the largest fortification of the early historic period. This area of fortification is locally called Seturājanakaṭṭe, in all probability a corruption of the ancient appellation Sātavāhana Koṭe, meaning the fort of the Sātavāhanas.[1] There are two *stūpas*. The one near the river bank was razed to the ground decades ago. Only its circular base now remains. The sculptured panels, the *āyaka* pillars and other architectural members which embellished the large *stūpa* were lying randomly on the site. Some of these also have been used in the construction of a modern temple near the *stūpa* remains. A relief representing the Buddhapāda (Plate 54) has been transported to the temple of the local Goddess Candralāmbā, and placed in its precincts under a neem tree. However, more than hundred sculptures so far have been salvaged and preserved in the Government Museum at Gulbarga.[2] The other *stūpa* (Plate 52) is almost intact, awaiting the spade of the archaeologist.

So far fifty-two inscriptions, many of which are fragmentary in character, have been found from this *stūpa* site.[3] Among these, three are in characters ascribable to the seventh century A.D. The others are in Brāhmī characters of about the second century A.D. All the Brāhmī inscriptions are commemorative or donative records.

The epigraphs show that the slabs on which they appear, sometimes decorated with reliefs, adorned the great *stūpa*. Further, they show that members of all strata of society, from the royalty to professional dancers (*nāṭikas*), contributed to the meritorious act of the *stūpa* construction.

Some of the more important epigraphs are:

1. Fragment of a slab, found near the *stūpa* site (Plate 55). It has a three-line inscription which reads:[4]

1. Siddham Rañō Vasiṭhiputasa siri-sata
2. pavajitena Nāgabudhi (nā antevāsiniya bhikuṇiyā)
3. yakhiyāya. .....

The inscription probably refers to Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Sātakarṇi of the Sātavāhana dynasty. It also mentions Nāgabudhi, a monk and a person named Yakhī.

2. A fragment of a slab which also once had

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relief sculptures. On its side is a fragmentary inscription (Plate 56) reading:

Mahāraṭhi-putasa

That probably refers to a dignitary who donated the relief for the *stūpa*.

3. The following inscription (Plate 57) is carved in the space above the sculptured panel representing a female dignitary seated on a high seat, attended by two females, one serving wine into a chalice held by the lady and the other holding a circular fan (*tālavṃtaka*). The seat is relieved just by engraved lines, but it is sufficiently effective in giving depth to the sculpture. The inscription in one line reads:[5]

Rājāmacasa Gaganakasa Bhāriyāye
Rājāmaciyā Rāmasiriya

It evidently records the donation of the sculptured slab by *rājāmātya* Rāmasiri, wife of the *rājāmātya*, Gaganaka, probably a minister of the king.

4. This inscription (Plate 58) engraved in two lines is on a large pillar:[6]

1. (..... mī)-putasa Hathilasa naṭikāya
   Budha-seṇiyāṇam Muṇāliya nāṭikāya
   pakārayatiyāya Govidāsiya
2. (nāṭi) kāya naḍiya Guḍa-putiyā-a
   Āyadasiya naḍiya vāḷukiyāya
   Mugūdikāya

It mentions the dancer (nāṭikā) Govidāsi, who belonged to the group Budhaśreṇi and paid for the construction of the enclosure (prākāra). There is also a reference to one other dancer, Aryadasi, daughter of Guḍa.

5. The next important epigraph (Plate 59) is engraved on a flat slab, an architectural member, with a half-lotus decoration at the top. The two-line inscription describing it as the *Deva-chaja* (*Deva-chādya*) reads:

1. Sidhaṁ Serāmasa putaṇam
2. Mukena kārito devachadako

This *devachadaka* (probably awning) was made by Muka, son of Srirāma. Noteworthy is the influence of Sanskrit in this Prakrit text, in the words *kārito* and *devachadakō*.

6. This inscription (Plate 60) reads:[7]

.... thakārasa Nāgadeva(sa)

The slab on which it is engraved is a donation of Nāgadeva, whose profession is unclear in this fragmentary inscription. If the preceding letter is *ra*, it will be *rathakāra*, a carpenter or Viśvakarmā, specialized in chariot making.

7. One of the slabs (Plate 61) from near the *stūpa* has been used in the construction of the modern Durgā temple. It has a five-line inscription,[8] which reads:

1. Muḍāṇa Mahāgāmi u
2. mārasa detikasa (ōtikasa)
3. bhaṭi bālikāya
4. Ahimarikāya
5. Purisadatāya

It records that Detika or (*Otika*), a *Mahāgrāmi-Kumāra* of Muḍāṇa, was the donor of this slab, given in honor of, or in the name of, the lady Puruṣadattā of Ahimarikā, a place whose name appears in two other epigraphs noted below.

8. One of them is on an *āyaka* pillar found near the second *stūpa*.[9] The top of the inscribed face depicts a couple in a drinking scene, holding chalices in their hands and seated on a pedestal, inside a structure which has three-*gavākṣa* dormers. The couple is served by two attendants holding a wine jug. At the base is a two-line inscription (Plate 62) which reads:

1. Ahimarikāya Nāganikāya
2. Arikā-bhātuno Giridatanakasa

The inscription records a gift of (this pillar) by one Giridatanaka, brother of Arika, for or in honor of, Nāganikā of Ahimarikā. The couple depicted in the relief may be identified as Giridatanaka and Nāganikā. The latter name was common in that period and is also found in the inscriptions of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.

9. The other inscription (Plate 63) that mentions Ahimarikā, is on a fragment of a sculptured slab. Unfortunately the sculpture is mutilated, but we can see a part of the head of a female. The inscription reads:

(Ghari)ṇiya Ahimarikā(ya)

The donor seemingly is a housewife (gṛhiṇī) from Ahimarikā reflecting that housewives, too, made donations for the *stūpa*. This is indeed evident from several other inscriptions too.

10. A lady named Samā figures in two records (Plate 64), probably as the donatrix:

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ghariṇiya Samāya

11. The second one also has a similar brief text:

ghariṇiya Samā

12. One other fragment of a slab just mentions *ghariṇī*.

13. Not only the *gṛhiṇīs*, but also householders too made gifts. There is, thus, a slab (Plate 65) with an oval top and a *gavākṣa*-dormer donated by the householder Sulasa:[10]

Gahapatisa Sulasasa

Apart from this class, tradesmen made donations. Recall the great donations of Bhutapala, the notable *sreṣṭhi* of Vaijayantī (Banavasi), who caused the excavation of the great *caityālaya* at Karle, which was said to be the best in the whole of Jambūdvīpa.[11] Similarly at Sannati, too, there are epigraphs attesting to gifts from merchants.

14. A large slab depicts the merchants Senaṇha seated along with his wife on a pedestal and attended by three females. The oval top depicts three arched *caitya* windows and a couple, probably the donor and his wife, looking out of a *vātāyana*. In between, on the molding, is an inscription (Plate 66) reading: [12]

Vaniyasa Senaṇha

It may not be out of place here to refer to a similar slab (Plate 67) from Jevargi on the Bhīmā, located upstream from Sannati. In this example there are three panels: the lowest one depicts a bullock cart with one bullock yoked and the other unyoked. The cart driver is in his position, while the carriage has another passenger, probably his wife. The central panel has the couple seated on a *pīṭha*, attended by four female servants. The top panel has a *gavākṣa*-dormer at the center, a hut motif on the left and a square motif on the right. In between is the couple looking out from a *vātāyana*.

In between the lower two panels is an inscription which reads:

Vaṇiasa Vīrasa vaṇi-i-ṇiyaṇam aṁṇiya

It is a memorial to the merchant, (*vaṇika*) Vīra and his wife. The lowest panel symbolically reflects the journey's end, as suggested by K.V. Ramesh.[13] The bullock cart depicted in the lowest panel of this slab is exactly similar to the metal cart unearthed in the excavations at Brahmpuri, near Kolhapur.[14] The form of the memorial slab and the depiction of the three panels—a form and motif—have been copied by the later *vīragaḷs* of Karnataka.

It further may be noted that such slabs have been donated by the kin of the departed in the construction of the *stūpas* with the intention that the deceased may obtain the merit. While it is very likely that such slabs were an integral part of the *stūpa*, the possibility of these having been stray memorial slabs cannot also be ruled out. The slab found at Jevargi may well have traveled from Sannati.

15. Besides local merchants, some foreigners also had made gifts. During the Sātavāhana times, southern India had trade and cultural contacts with the Roman empire. Roman coins have been found in very large numbers in the Karnataka region, for example at Bangalore airport where 256 silver coins of Augustus and Tiberius contained in a red ware jar were discovered in 1965.[15] Further M.N. Deshpande has drawn attention to the classical influence of Indian terracotta art[16] of the kind found in Sannati. Also found at Sannati were sculptures of female attendants with foreign hairdo, probably Roman (Plates 68 and 69).

The presence of foreigners thus surmised is confirmed by epigraphical evidence. There are two inscriptions on a fragmentary slab which originally showed two female figures, although now only a portion of one of the figures remains. She is in a standing posture with her left hand resting on her hips. She wears two circular earrings. On the side of the molding are two inscriptions mentioning persons:

(a) maci Yavaṇikā amaci Saṁghaṇikā

The figure now remaining on the slab is that of Saṁghaṇikā, that of Yavaṇikā being mutilated (Plate 70). The term *yavana* usually referred to Ionian Greeks and later to Greeks and Romans. Considering the times, it may not be wrong to identify at least one of these two ladies as Roman.

16. Another inscription (Plate 71) reads:[17]

1. (gha)riṇiya Sihaḷiya
2. ..... hamana dēya

This refers to a *gṛhiṇi* from Simhaḷa (Śrī Laṅkā).

The following four persons, whose names are mentioned in inscriptions, also donated slabs:

17. Araka (Plate 72)
18. Somaghosanīkā (Plate 73)
19. Samkapa (Plate 74)
20. Muḍāni (Plate 75)

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The first name appears on a sculptured slab with two fragmentary panels. The lower one depicts the head of a servant holding a horse, while the upper panel shows a lady seated on a *moḍa*. Somaghosanikā was either the donor of a second relief, or the donation was made for her.[18] It also depicts a lady with a fan in her hand, while the top portion depicts three *gavākṣas*. Sampaka donated the third relief with a fragmentary representation of riderless horses in the lower panel, and in the upper panel probably the couple seated on a *pīṭha*. The riderless horse may represent journey's end. The fourth one, dedicated by Muḍāni, depicts a couple with an attendant (all figures badly mutilated and only heads now remain) in the lower panel, and, a couple on a *pīṭha* (also partly discernible) in the upper panel.

Three more sculptured fragments are also inscribed:

21. . .la bhātusa Atisayāya chāya (padima) (Plate 76)
22. . .ṇha Ghāli Viśākha ra . . (Plate 77)
23. Seloṇakāya (Plate 78)

The first one, with a fragmentary sculpture of a person, bears an inscription referring to the memorial (*chāya-pratimā*) of one Atiśaya, brother of someone whose name is lost. This reminds of the *chāya-pratimā* of Kalaka on the slab from Belvadgi.[19] The second one, also a memorial slab, has a beautiful riderless horse in bold relief. There is also a seated figure above, partly remaining. The inscription refers to *ghāli* Viśākha. The third is a slab set up for or in honor of Saloṇakā, a lady.[20]

A similar sculptured memorial slab was found near a temple in the village Hippargi on the bank of the Bhīmā, about 30 km from Gulbarga. An inscription (Plate 79) on the molding between the sculptured panels reads:

24. Mahākulakiyāṇam Bhojakasa Rakhitasa

It appears to be a memorial to Rakṣita, a person bearing a Buddhist name, who held the office of *bhojaka*.

25. At Sannati an officer identified as an *Akṣapaṭalika* made a donation recorded on a fragmentary slab:[21]

akhapaṭalika (Plate 80)

26. Finally, a long piece donated by the disciple lady Samā has a sculpture in bold relief depicting an elephant, a winged animal with a human head, a winged lion, and a winged deer. The elephant probably represents the Buddha, as the elephant is not winged, while other animals are. The upper molding has floral motif, while the lower molding has a row of bells (Plate 81). On the reverse of this beam is a one-line inscription (Plate 82) which reads:

. . . puta Tikasa Mitabhūtino bhaginiyā Samā upāsikāyā,

that is, for the lady disciple Samā, sister of Mitabhūti.

A study of these select inscriptions shows that the majority of the donors were ladies. The gifts otherwise were made by people belonging to all walks of life. Many of the sculptured casement slabs were memorials to the departed, and by setting up these slabs as part of the *stūpa*, merit accrued both to those departed and also to those who set them up.[22]

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Dr. K.V. Ramesh for this information.

2. For an account of the antiquities from Sannati, *see*, M. Seshadri, "Buddhist Monuments at Sannathi," *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, Vol. LVI (1965), pp. 35–37; P.B. Desai, "A New Buddhist Centre," *The Journal of the Karnatak University—Social Sciences*, Vol. IV (1968), pp. 3–8; M. Seshadri, "Buddhist Monuments in Mysore," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 2/3 (1972), pp. 169–170; and M.S. Nagaraja Rao, *Progress of Archaeology in Karnataka 1956–1972*, Mysore 1978, pp. 29, 35–36.

3. G.S. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1966–67, Mysore 1972, pp. 37–39, lists 31 inscriptions, and Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1968–69, lists 11 inscriptions from Sannati.

4. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1968–69, App. B, No. 87.

5. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1966–67, App. B, No. 228.

6. *Ibid.*, No. 213.

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7. *Ibid.*, No. 232.
8. *Ibid.*, No. 223.
9. *Ibid.*, No. 225.
10. *Ibid.*, No. 231.
11. James Burgess and Bhagavanlal Indraji, *Archaeological Survey of Western India, Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India, with Descriptive Notes,* Bombay 1881, p. 28, Inscription No. 1. and plate opposite p. 28, No. 1. The text reads. *Vejayantito Seṭhino Bhūtapālena Selagharam Pariniṭhapitam Jabudīpamhi Uttama.*
12. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1966–67. App. B. No. 229.
13. K.V. Ramesh. "A Brāhmī Inscription from Belavadig." *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVII (1967), pp. 131–32.
14. Karl J. Khandalavala, "Brahmapuri, A Consideration of the Metal Objects Found in the Kundangar Hoard," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 7, Fig. 32, Toy Cart. From Brahmapuri. Sātavāhana, 2nd century A.D., Kolhapur Museum.
15. M. Seshadri, *Archaeology*, Vol. 19 (1968), p. 244: *see* also Nagaraja Rao, *Progress of Archaeology*, pp. 44–45.
16. M.N. Deshpande, "Classical Influence on Indian Terracotta Art," *Proceedings of the Huitieme Congress International d'Archeologie Classique*, Paris 1965, pp. 603–610.
17 Gai. ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1968–69. App. B. No. 95.
18. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1966–67. App. B. No. 203.
19. Ramesh, "A Brāhmī Inscription."
20. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1966–67. App. B. No. 230.
21. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1968–69. App. B. No. 96.
22. I am most grateful to Dr. K.V Ramesh, who very kindly read through this paper and made valuable suggestions.

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8

The Kanheri Caitya Hall and Its Foundation Inscription: A Reëxamination

S. NAGARAJU

THE CAITYA HALL at Kanheri (Cave 3)[1] is a monument of considerable significance to the study of Buddhist architecture of western India, the cave being a fairly elaborate architectural work possessing significant sculptures,[2] and, what is more, a datable foundation inscription.[3] Art historians regard this as the last of the monuments in the evolutionary series of the Hînayāna vault-roofed *caitya* halls in western India and date it to the last quarter of the second century A.D., on the basis of the foundation inscription of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi (*c.* 172–201 A.D.) of the Sātavāhana dynasty.[4] Thus it seems that here is a securely dated monument, which can be profitably used as a time-style reference for stylistic comparisons and determinations concerning relative dating of the large mass of undated rock-cut monuments of western India. But a closer scrutiny of the monument and its foundation inscription reveals that one has to exercise great caution in conceding to the forenoted view. There is, in point of fact, a need for a thorough reassessment of the situation and a fresh reconstruction of the history of this important architectural work as is demonstrated in this paper.

Even a casual observation of this monument discloses several disharmonious features in its general plan (Figure 1) and in the style of execution of its parts. First of all it may be noted that in the colonnade dividing the nave and the aisles inside the hall, some three varieties of pillars have been employed, and there is also some want of symmetry in their arrangement (Plate 84). While the first six pillars, counted from the front, on either side of the nave, are of the pot-base and pot-and-animal capital variety (Nāsik type), the next five in the left row have similar capitals but no basal pots. The corresponding pillars in the right row have neither the pot-base nor the pot-and-animal capitals, but are simple octagonal shafts rising from floor to roof. The pillars further behind on either side and the back apse have similarly octagonal shafts but are somewhat stouter. Second, there is variance between the form of the main *stūpa* and that of the two *stūpas* depicted in the capitals of two pillars inside the hall (Plates 84 and 85). The *stūpas* shown on the pillars are of an evolved type having a socle, the drum with *vedikā* decoration, the solid domical *aṇḍa* part with slightly incurved sides and the *harmikā* with a square inverted stepped-pyramidal member above; the main *stūpa* is of a simple type with no socle, no decoration, nor the stepped pyramidal member; and its domical portion is almost hemispherical. Third, while the pillar type employed for framing the large *mithuna*-panels of the back wall of the verandah is of the same Nāsik type as that of the pillars inside the hall, the pillar type depicted in the frame of the *Yakṣa*-panel at the right end of the front parapet differs from the foregoing variety (Plates 86 and 87). Fourth, no panel is seen at the left end of the front parapet corresponding to the one at the right end

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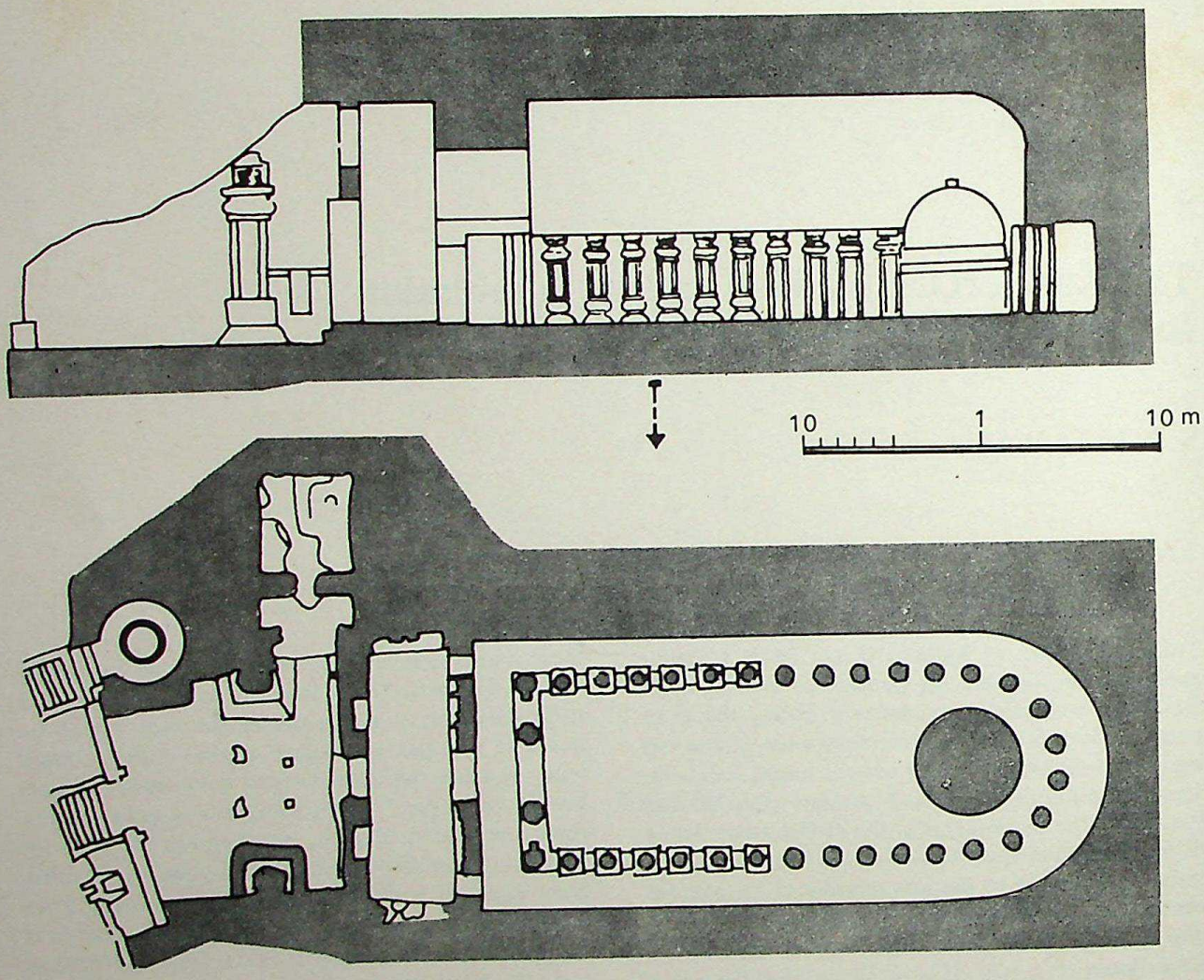

Figure 1. Kanheri Cave 3. Plan and transverse section.

mentioned above (Plate 83). Fifth, the alignment of the forecourt slightly deviates towards right, and a large mass of rock has been left uncut on the left wall of that court (Plate 83). Sixth, the two huge pillars in the forecourt differ from each other. Though both are raised on a high decorated podium and have octagonal shafts with pot and stepped-pyramid capitals carrying some figures, the shaft of the southern pillar has an additional collar made at a height a little above the middle, and a few small figures above that and at the base of the shaft (Plates 88 and 89).

These variations in the delineation of different members and the negligence shown in maintaining architectural symmetry, harmony and balance can hardly be conceived in a monument had it been executed at one time, planned as it then would have been as a single unified design. It is more likely that the present monument is the ultimate result of works carried out in different stages with considerable intervals of time. This would contradict the notion that this *caitya* hall was excavated during the reign of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi and thus in a single span.

Two questions, as a result, follow: What were the stages of work in the making of this *caitya* hall, and with what particular stage of operation is the inscription of Yajña Śrī associated? The data available from this cave and its foundation inscription are insufficient to answer them; but the situation is not entirely

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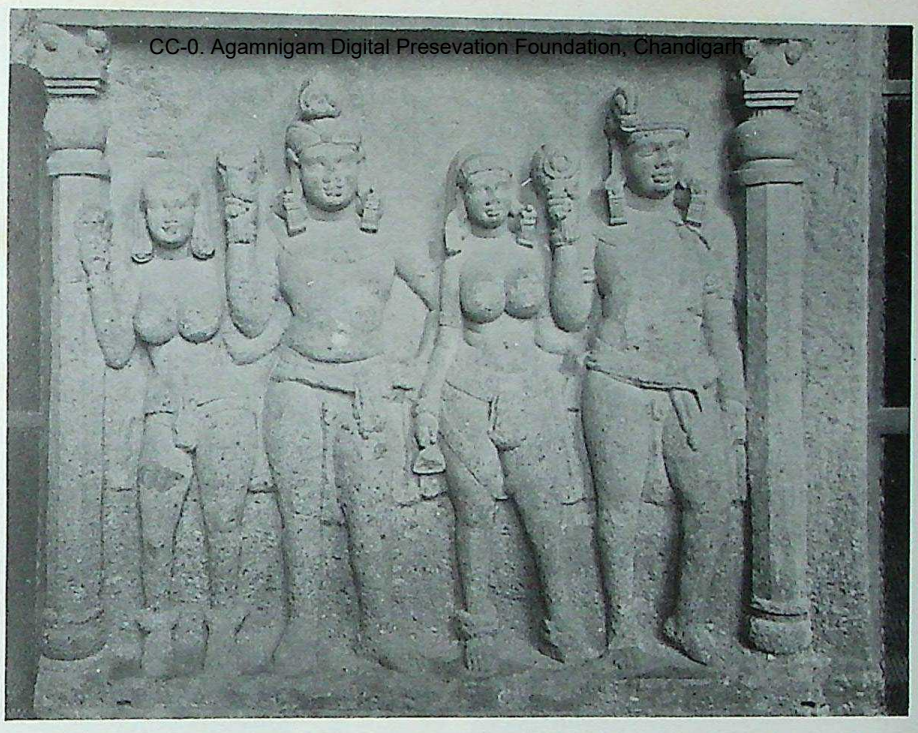

Plate 86. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), *mithuna* panel to the left on the back wall of the verandah.

Plate 87. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), railing decoration and the *Nāga* panel on the outer side of the right parapet in front of the open forecourt.

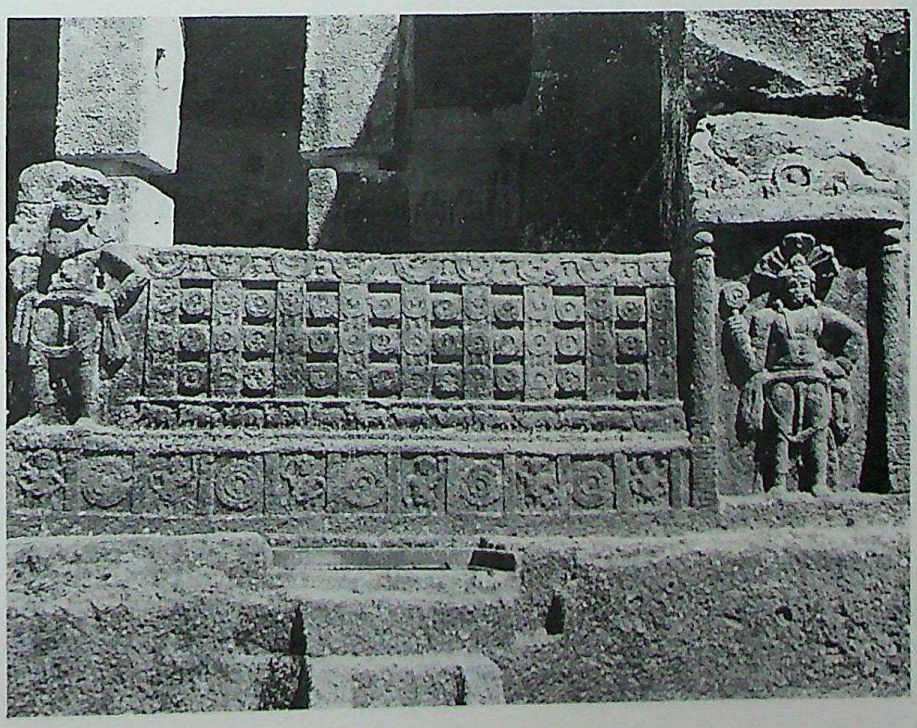

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Plate 88. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), pillar on the left side in the open forecourt.

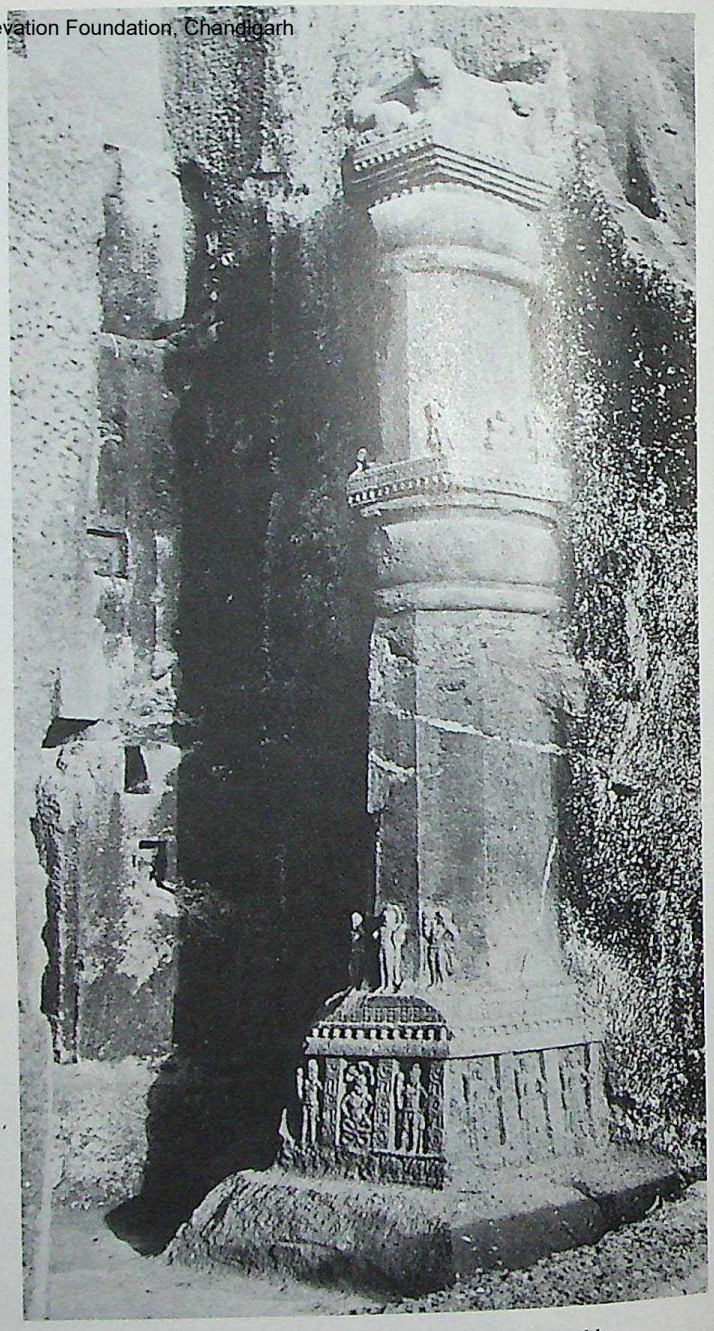

Plate 89. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), *dhvajastambha*.

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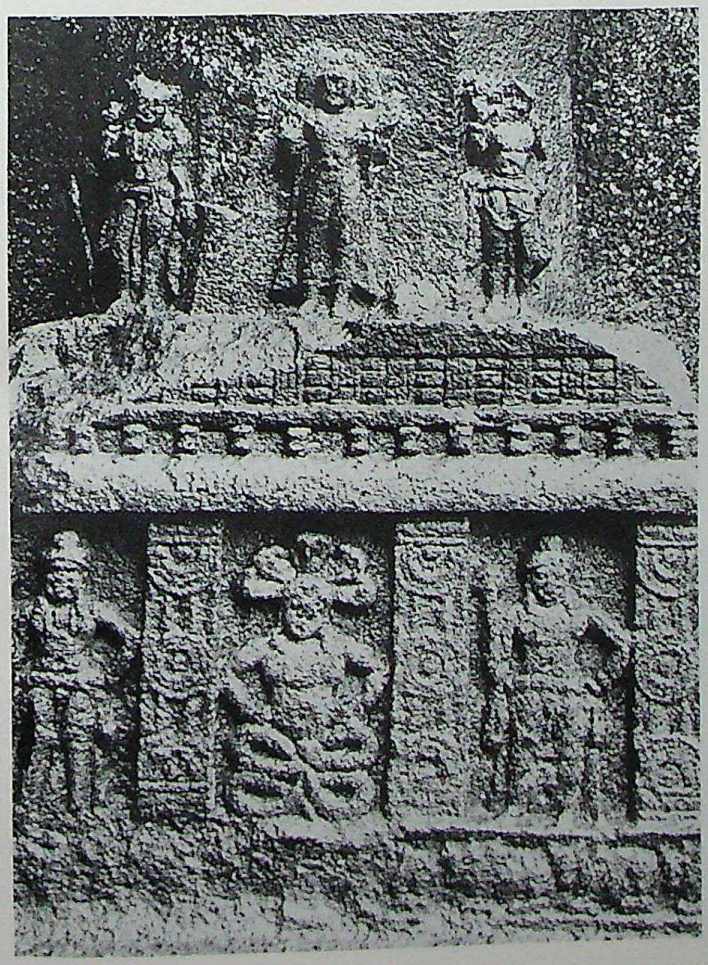
Plate 91. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), *Nāga* panel at the right end of the parapet in front of the open forecourt.

Plate 90. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), decoration on the podium of the pillar to the right in the open forecourt.



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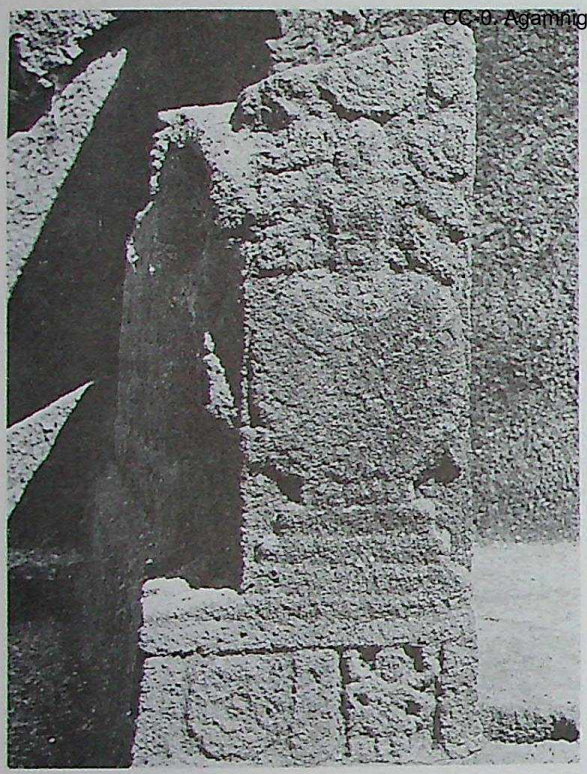

Plate 92. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), a *purṇakumbha* on the inner side of the gate-post of the right parapet in front of the open forecourt.

Plate 93. Kanheri. *Caitya*-hall (Cave 3), a Buddha figure in the verandah. *c.* 4th-5th century A.D.

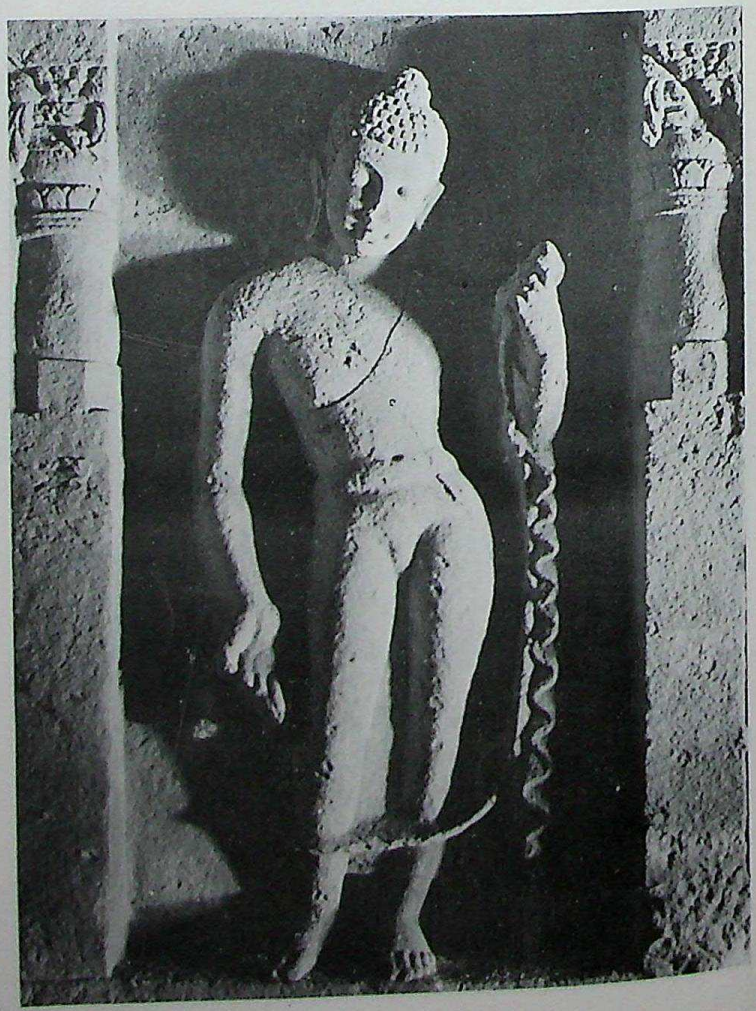

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Plate 94. South-western corner of Kṛṣṇagiri hill.

Plate 95. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

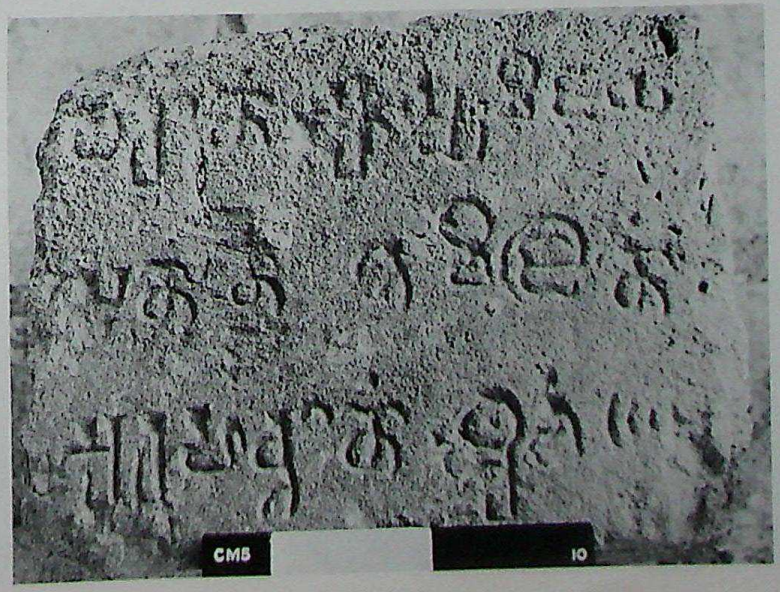

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Plate 96. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

Plate 97. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

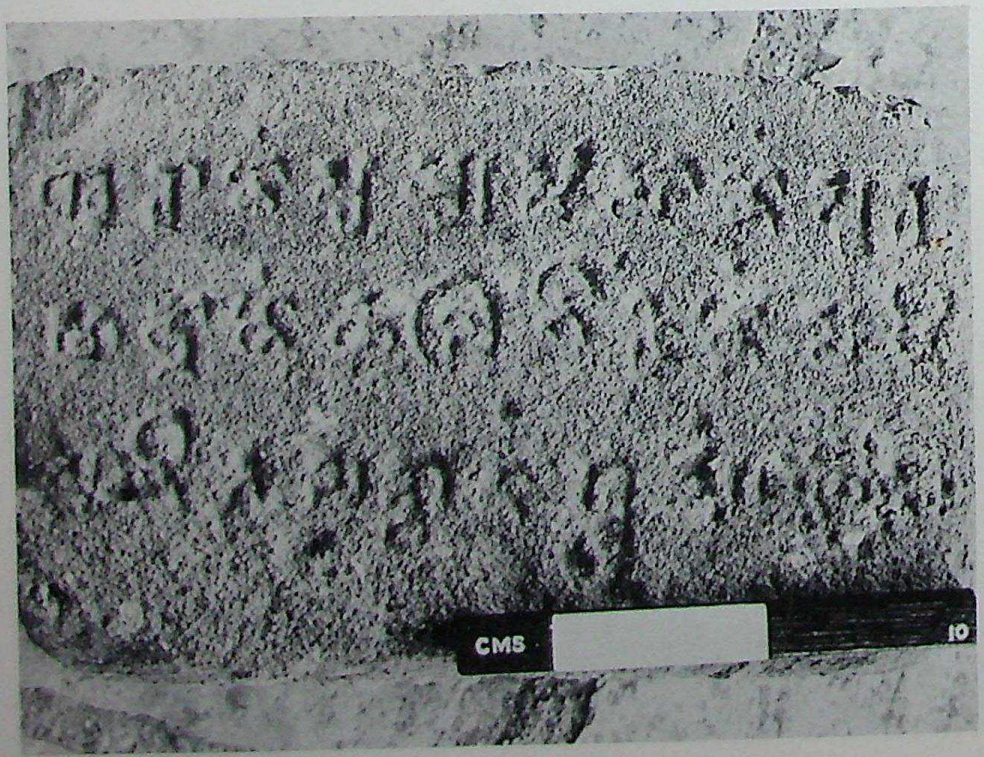

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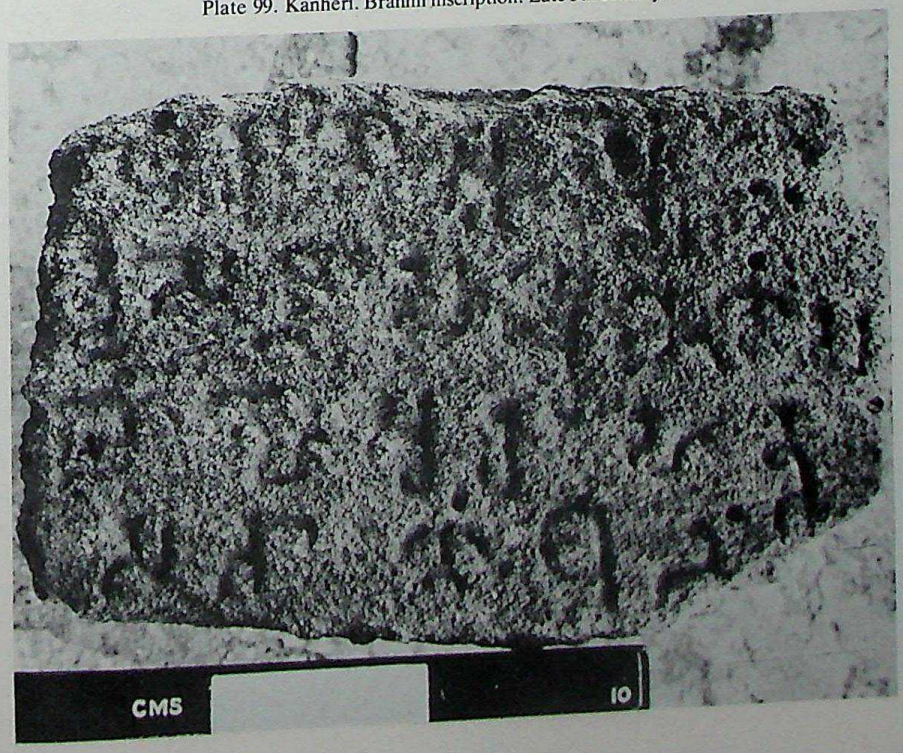
Plate 98. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

Plate 99. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.



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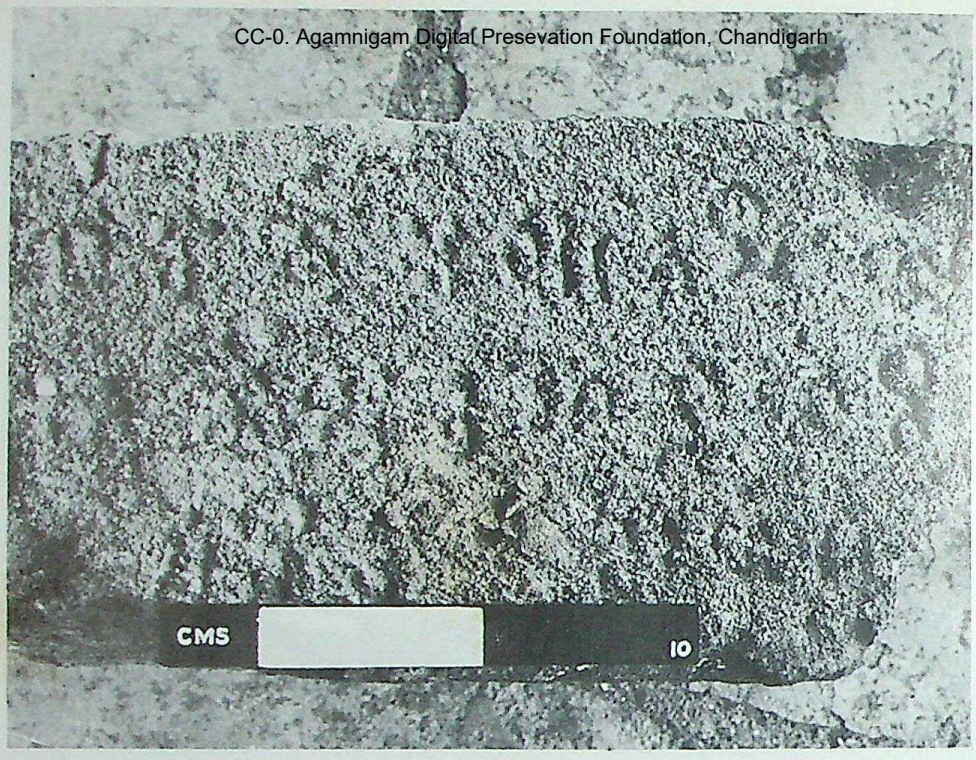

Plate 100. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

Plate 101. Kanheri. Brāhmī inscription. Late 5th century A.D.

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hopeless. With the help of stylistic comparisons, such as could be recognized in the components of this cave, supplemented to a certain degree by knowledge of the situations obtaining elsewhere in the context of the development of rock-cut *caitya* halls in western India, the different stages of work that this cave witnessed in its making can be postulated as follows:

1. The first stage was the one in which the simplest types of components are seen. Such easily recognizable features here are the main *stūpa* and the octagonal pillars inside the hall. In the *caitya* halls of western India, the use of simple octagonal pillars inside is a fairly widespread practice;[5] the evidence begins from the time of the famous *caitya* hall at Bhājā (*c.* beginning of the 2nd century B.C.). But in contrast to the Bhājā pillars, the pillars here are straight, without any recognizable raking or tapering. Further, as it is a pre-requisite in rock-cut architecture to scoop out the front side first to reach the point where these octagonal pillars were to be carved out, and as no new part monolithically can be introduced once the rock-mass is cut away, a provision must have been made for the front verandah also before beginning to hew out the main portion of this cave. In the history of rock-cut *caitya* halls of western India, the only monument that has all these features together, namely the plain perfectly vertical octagonal columns inside the hall and verandah in front, is the *caitya* hall at Beḍsā.[6] 'So, I feel, the first stage of work in this *caitya* hall is also to be assigned to a time near the time of excavation of the Beḍsā, *caitya* hall—probably to a slightly earlier date than that in view of the simplicity as well as formal configuration of the *stūpa* here compared to the one Beḍsā, but certainly to a date posterior to the *caitya* halls without verandah such as Ajaṇṭā Cave 9 and Nasik Cave 18.[7]

We can visualize the unfinished form of this monument as it stood after the first stage of work, then consisting of the interior which may have looked like the interior of the unfinished *caitya* hall in the Bhūtaleṇa group on the Mānmoḍi hill at Junnar, in which the roughly finished *stūpa* and the side walls with rough marks made for the pillars that were yet to be cut are seen.[8] In the present cave, however, octagonal pillars at the back of the nave and five more on the right line, too, had been fashioned. As the technique of rock-cut architecture would demand, before the carving of the *stūpa* and the octagonal pillars, the front central doorway, the great *caitya* dormer on the top of the inner screen wall and the nave with its vaulted ceiling also must have been finished. On the basis of the features to be noticed below, the cave appears to have had in front a long narrow approach cut through the rock-mass to reach clear up to a small transverse open court just in front of the façade, like that seen even now in front of the *caitya* hall at Beḍsā.

2. The second stage of work in the cave was executed at a time when the pot-base and pot-and-animal capital variety of pillars were in fashion. At this stage, the interior hall was finished by cutting pillars of this type in their proper positions wherever the rock-mass had been left out undug in the previous stage of work, such as in the case of the first six pillars on either side of the nave. But wherever the octagonal pillars had already been finished, nothing more could be done with them, left as they were untouched as in the case of the five pillars on the right side of the nave. The corresponding pillars on the left side of the nave, however, must have had enough rock mass intact at the top so that the pot-and-animal capitals could be carved, but their lower portions already may have been fashioned, leaving no scope for shaping pot-bases (Figure 1 and Plate 84). This possibly explains the reason for the stark variances and the want of symmetry in the use of pillars, inside the hall. The miniature *stūpas* cut on the pillars, too, naturally followed the fashion of the day, thus differing in form from the main *stūpa* (Plates 84 and 85). The two huge *mithuna* panels on the back wall of the verandah also were made at this stage as indicated by the pillar type employed for their frames (Plate 86), which is the same Nasik type used inside the hall.

Of necessity, if the above-mentioned parts were to be fashioned, the aisles inside the hall and the whole of the verandah, too, must have been completed. Hence by this time, the monument had taken the full form of a regular *caitya* hall with parts though of differing dates.

3. The remarkable similarity of the sculptures found on the podia of the forecourt pillars with those on the front parapet (Plates 90 and 91) shows that they all are contemporary. In contrast, the difference in the pillar type employed in the *mithuna* panels in the verandah and those in the *yakṣa* panel on the parapet (Plates 86 and 91)—as already stated—and also the difference in delineation in these two sets of sculptures, show that these are to be placed in two different stages (Plates 86 and 91). Hence I feel that the third stage witnessed the completion of the forecourt pillars, particularly of their podia, and the

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parapet in front. Obviously it is at this stage that the whole of the open court was cut, but some deviation from its symmetrical layout became necessary, possibly due to the existence of Cave 4 in its neighborhood, dug as it seems to have been prior to this one. The large rock-mass left in the northern sector of the forecourt and the absence of the *yakṣa* panel at the end of the left-parapet (Fig. 1 and Plate 83) were due to the caution exercised by the architects working at this stage, not to threaten the safety or deform the appearance of Cave 4.

The stages of work postulated above, I feel, provide a logical explanation to the discrepancies in style and a symmetry noticeable in the formulation of this cave. Now it is necessary to determine with what particular stage of work in this cave the inscription of Yajña Śrī is to be connected.

The inscription, by itself, does not clearly mention any particular work that was carried out at the time it was engraved. Further, its state of preservation is far from satisfactory, and many words which may have drawn a clearer picture are unfortunatley missing.[9] However, a careful study of even the extant text shows that at least three stages of work in the making of this *cetiyaghara* are indicated.[10]

First, after giving the name of the king and certain details of date, there is mention of merchants (*Vāṇijakehi*, 1.4) who appear to have done something. Then there is reference to two *kṣatriya* brothers (*khātiyehi bhātuhi*, 1.6) Gajasena and Gajamitra who appear to have established (*Patiṭhāpitaṁ*) the *cetiyaghara* for the accrual of religious merit to their parents and others. It is also said that the cave was meant to be received by the monks of the Bhadāyanīya sect (11.6-15). This is followed (11.15-19) by the statement that this cave was completed (*samāpitā*) by some *bhadaṁtas* and one Apareṇuka.[11]

It is likely to encounter here a reference to the preliminary hewing that had been commenced and left unfinished by the *vānijakas* (1. *Vānijaka* stage), which later was extended, given the shape of the *caitya* hall and commissioned for use by the *kṣatriya* brothers (2. *patiṭhāpitā* stage), and then, probably, by giving finishing touches to the main *caitya* hall and adding other accessories (like the forecourt) the work finally was completed (3. *samāpitā* stage). It is interesting to note that these three stages indicated by the inscription appear to correspond respectively with the three stages noted above from stylistic considerations.

But the problem of identifying the stage of work which falls within the reign of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi still remains. A proper answer to this depends upon deciding whether the date mentioned in the beginning of the record refers to the sentence ending with *patiṭhāpitā* (1. 10) or to the one ending with *samāpitā* (1. 19). The simple answer that comes from any of those who are conversant with the textual pattern of inscriptions is that the first sentence in the inscription, which begins with the mention of the date of the then reigning king, ends with *patiṭhāpitā*; hence, it is to this that the date possibly refers. It can be further added that the lines immediately following the above have the common expressions "for the benefit of (accrual of merit for) the parents," and "for the happiness of all sentient beings" which normally appear at the end of the inscriptions. Hence, in this case the inscription proper, starting from the king's name and date, ended here, and that which follows next, including the sentence ending with *samāpitā* may be a supplementary inscription. While this seems quite logical, we may add that whatever be the nature of the latter part of the record, even that must have been engraved along with the first part. There is hardly any palaeographical difference in the writing of the two parts. But this situation requires some careful examination.

So far as the textual pattern of the inscriptions is concerned, it would be appropriate to take into consideration, for the purpose of comparison, the inscriptions of the same age and the region. There are two other instances in early western Indian caves where the inscriptions dated in regnal years have subsidiary records also written in continuation to them. They are the famous inscriptions of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi and Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi from Cave 3 at Nasik.[12] Both of these consistently follow a system of introducing the subsidiary inscriptions again with the king's name and date. If this is considered to be the normal practice of the age, why has it not been followed in the present inscription? A suspicion naturally arises whether the date mentioned in the beginning refers to the date of engraving the record, which of course must have been done after the final completion, *samāpitā*, of all the work relating to this cave, possibly to commemorate this event. The way in which the latter part of the record commences with words like *ethaca* would also indicate that there is a continuation in narration from the previous, in which case the date may as well refer to *samāpitā*.

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Unexpected support to the above surmise comes from another inscription at Kanheri itself. In the inscription in question is a list of persons who have been responsible for the completion of the work of the cave (i.e. the work referred to as *samāpitā*), among them one Apareṇu, son of Ānada, who is an *upāsaka* and of a *negama* (*Upāsako ca negamasa Ānada-puto Apareṇuko*). It appears that the same person also was the donor of Cave 21 (Old 81) at this place, since he is mentioned in the foundation inscription of that cave with similar details—*Negamasa Ānada-putasa upāsakasa Apareṇusa*.[13] This is an inscription dated in the 16th regnal year of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi. I feel that this is strong evidence for showing that the date of Yajña Śrī's inscription in the present cave should be referred to the *samāpitā* stage with which Apareṇu, mentioned in the inscription of the time of the same king in Cave 21, is associated. It has been shown that in the sequence of work in this *caitya* hall, the forecourt and the other features associated with it like the tall pillars and the front parapet, belong to the last stage, following the completion of the main structure of the *caitya* hall. Naturally, these could have been carried out in the *samāpitā* stage, which in the inscription follows the notice of the commissioning of the *cetiyaghara* (*patiṭhāpitā*). Thus this leads to the deduction that the forecourt and its accessories are the works of the time of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi.

This conclusion finds unexpected support again from another inscription from Kanheri.[14] That is in Cave 4, situated next to the *caitya* hall. Palaeographically that inscription occupies a stage between the known inscriptions of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi and those of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi,[15] and possibly belongs to the time of Yajña Śrī's immediate predecessor Śivaskanda Sātakarṇi. Thus Cave 4 likely dates to the time of Śivaskanda. The forecourt, as already indicated, on the basis of its deviation from the symmetry of the lay-out, and its accessories like the parapet, dates later than Cave 4. So these features should have been made later than the time of Śivaskanda but before the time of Yajña Śrī's inscription in the *caitya* hall, thus narrowing the time span in which these were shaped to precisely a few years within the reign of Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi.

The above-mentioned inscription in Cave 4 is engraved on the *harmikā* of the *stūpa* inside and records that it is the *stūpa* of (i.e. erected in honor of) one *bhadata* Dharmapāla. A *bhadata* Dharmapāla appears in the present *caitya* hall inscription also as one of the persons associated with the *samāpitā* stage of work. It is no accident that the same name appears in two inscriptions engraved about the same time in caves situated close to one another. Thus Dharmapāla of the *caitya* hall inscription likely has been commemorated after his death by the erection of a *stūpa* very near the *caitya* hall for the cause of which he apparently had dedicated his life. In view of the palaeography of that inscription, one may postulate that after the *caitya* hall was commissioned for use, and before the shaping of the forecourt and its accessories like the parapet, some works must have preceded with which this Dharmapāla was connected. As there is no recognizable architectural work remaining now that can be placed between those two stages, what was done during the lifetime of Dharmapāla could be the heroic job of cutting down the vast mass of rock in front of the *cetiyaghara* to facilitate shaping the forecourt at the present level. During the process, the two large columns in the forecourt—most probably the capitals of both and the shaft of the left column alone—may have been hewn.

There is also some internal evidence in the *caitya* hall inscription to imply the possible date in which this *caitya* hall was commissioned for use (*paṭithāpitā*). The detailed way in which the *patiṭhāpanā* event is mentioned followed by *etha ca* etc. in the text may suggest that the interval between the *patiṭhāpitā* and the *samāpitā* stages may not have been very long. The fact that the cave was to be placed in charge of the monks of the Bhadāyanīya order, as mentioned in the details relating to the *patiṭhāpitā* stage, gains some significance in this regard. Elsewhere I have shown that sometime after the reöccupation of the Deccan by Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, the Bhadāyanīya monks from the Āndhra country began to gain royal patronage in the western Deccan.[16] This inference is endorsed by an inscription of the time of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi which declares that the cave at Nāsik (Cave 3, so-called Gautamīputra's cave) had been given to the Bhadāyanīya monks from Dhanakaṭa (Dhānyakaṭaka, Amarāvati).[17] On circumstantial evidence, I have contended that this act of settling the monks from Dhanakaṭa in a monastery near an important town in the Deccan almost immediately after it had been reoccupied could have been partly an act of political expediency on the part of the newly victorious Sātavāhanas.[18] Near Kanheri, important towns such as Kalyan and Thana similarly had recently come under Sātavāhana control, thus demanding that

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monks also belonging to that order and probably belonging to that region be settled at the Kanheri monastery. Elsewhere I have shown how a number of elements characteristic of the Amarāvatī school of art appear for the first time in the western Deccan in Gautamīputra's cave at Nāsik, presumably as a result of its Āndhra connection as revealed from the inscription there.[19] In the case of the Kanheri *caitya* hall, the remnant text of the inscription is silent about the place from which the Bhadāyanīya monks came. Attention is drawn to the details of decoration on the front parapet (Plates 87 and 92) and the representation of the worship of the Buddha's feet seen on one of the pillars in the interior of the hall which have a remarkable similarity with representations from Amarāvatī—a fact to which Fergusson and Burgess had drawn attention long ago.[20] So, it is likely that the *patiṭhāpitā* stage of work in this *caitya* hall was carried out in the reign of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi; this stage, associated in the inscription with the Bhadāyanīya monks, should be earlier than the *samāpitā* stage assigned to the reigns of Yajña Śrī and his predecessor in the foregoing discussion. The stylistic evidence also is in harmony with this deduction; the pot-base and pot-and-animal capital pillars inside this *caitya* hall are closer in design to the pillars of Gautamīputra's cave at Nāsik than to those seen in the *caitya* hall at Kārle.[21]

Appropriately, in the inscription engraved after the successful completion of all the works in this great *caitya* hall, the biggest and the most ornate rock-cut monument not only in the Kanheri group but in all Aparānta at that time, an attempt has been made to recall the contributions of various persons associated with it. Thus the *vānijakas*, who had made a beginning long ago, the *khatiya* brothers, who gave it a shape and proclaimed it for use, and the other *bhadantas* and the *upāsaka* Apareṇu, who carried out further work and brought it to completion, as well as the workers who participated in the execution of the project, like the supervisor, the stone masons and the polishers are all identified.

NOTES

1. Greater Bombay, Maharashtra State. In the present essay, the Kanheri *caitya* hall means only the original monument that had come into existence during the Hīnayāna Buddhist period. Subsequent Mahāyāna additions in the make-up of the monument, like the small cave cut in the north wall of the forecourt and the several Buddha figures (Plate 93) cut in the verandah, are of about the fourth-fifth century A.D. and have not been included in the discussion.

2. For a detailed description of the *caitya* hall and its sculptures, *see* J. Fergusson and J. Burgess, *The Cave Temples of India*, London 1880, p. 350 ff. Also J. Burgess, *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples and Their Inscriptions*, Archaeological Survey of Western India, Vol. IV, London 1883, p. 61 ff. And the *Gazetteers of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. XIV—Thana District*, Bombay 1882, p. 166 ff.

3. Kanheri Inscription No. 4. The text, with translation, is given by G. Bühler in J. Burgess, *Report on the Elura Cave Temples and the Brahmanical and Jaina Caves in Western India*, Archaeological Survey of Western India, Vol. V, p. 75.

Five more inscriptions from this cave have also been published in the above work. One of these is of the same age as the foundation inscription, but is much mutilated and indeed not useful to discussions in this paper, as also four others which are of the fourth-fifth century A.D. and one short unpublished inscription dated as late as *saṁvat* 893.

4. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture—Buddhist and Hindu Periods*, Bombay 1941, p. 25.

The Sātavāhana chronology is a much disputed problem. But I follow for this paper the dates arrived at on the basis of equating Nahapāṇa's year 46 (considered referable to the Śaka era) with the 18th regnal year of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, which is generally accepted as the fulcrum for Later Sātavāhana chronology.

The following, then, are the dates of kings relevant in the context of the present paper:

Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi (ruled in the western Deccan from *c.* 124 A.D. only)	*c.* 106–130 A.D.
Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḷumāvi	*c.* 130–158 A.D.

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Śivaśri Sātakarṇi	*c.* 158–165 A.D.
Śivaskanda Sātakarṇi	*c.* 165–172 A.D.
Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi	*c.* 172–201 A.D.

5. e.g. *caitya* halls at Ajaṇṭā (Caves 9 and 10), Aurangabad, Beḍsā, Bhājā, Koṇḍane, Pītalkhorā.

6. Fergusson and Burgess, *The Cave Temples*, p. 228.

7. Brown, *Indian Architecture*, p. 22; Also my doctoral thesis, *A Study of Rock-cut Architecture of Konkan and Western Deccan*, *c.* 250 B.C.–300 A.D. Karnataka University, Dharwar 1977 (unpublished) p. 949 ff.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 442.

9. The name of the king also does not appear in full. In the first line only *Raño Gotam* is well preserved and the next line starts with *Sotakamnissa*. The rest of the name in between, i.e. *i putasa Sāmī Siriyaña*, has been restored, correctly, of course, by the editor.

10. The text of the foundation inscription, engraved on the right hand gate-post of the *caitya* hall (*Burgess, Report on the Elura Caves*, p. 75).

1. Raño Gotam [i-putasa Sāmī-Siriyañasa]
2. Sotakaṁnissa [saṁvacare.....gi]
3. mha-pakhe paṁcame [5 divase.....]
4. vāṇijakehi utū (?) .....
5. ṇuya upaṁnehi gā .....
6. khātiyehi bhātu [hi.....]
7. Gajasenena Gajami [tena.....]
8. Kapaṭhāyi ceti [ya.....]
9. ācariyānaṁ nikā [yasa.... Bhadāya]
10. nīyānaṁ parigahe pa [tiṭhāpitaṁ ..... mā]
11. ta-pitūnaṁabhatītā [naṁ .....]
12. pūjāya kuṭumbinī [na bāla] kānaṁ bāli [kānaṁ]
13. savatasa bhāgineyāna nik [a] yasa nāti
14. vagasa ca aga paṭiasiya savva-sa [tānaṁ]
15. hita-sukhāya hetu [1] etha ca nava ...
16. kā pavajito therā bhadata Acalā bhādṁ [ta]
17. Ghalā bhadaṁta Vijayamitā bhadata Bo [dhiko]
18. bhadata Dhamapālā upāsako ca negamo* Ā [nada]
19. puto Aparenuko samāpitā [1] ācati[y]āna therāṇaṁ
20. bhadata Seuṁlānaṁ sisena Uparakhitana bha
21. data bodhikena kata sela-vaḍhakīhi [naya] kami
22. sehi kaḍhicak[e]hi mahā-kaṭakehi khadara
23. kinā ca mīṭhikenā**

11. The last part of the inscription mentions the names of different persons who participated in the actual execution of the work, like the supervisor, the stone mason, and the polisher.

12. E. Senart, "The Inscriptions in the Caves at Nasik," *E.I.*, Vol. VIII (1905–6), Nos. 4–5 and 2–3, pp. 71–75 and 60–71.

13. Burgess, *Report on the Elura Caves*, p. 79, Inscription No. 15.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 78, No. 10.

15. *Ibid.*, *see* note on the above inscription; also my thesis: A study of rock-cut architecture, Chart III.

16. *Vide* my paper, "The Queen's Cave at Nasik and the Andhra Country," *Prof. R. Subrahmanyam Felicitation Volume* (in press).

17. Senart, "The Inscriptions from the Caves at Nasik," p. 65, Inscription No. 3.

18. *Vide* my "The Queen's Cave."

19. *Ibid.*, also my "Nasik Cave 3—a Restudy," *Shri M.N. Deshpande Felicitation Volume*.

20. Fergusson and Burgess, *The Cave Temples of India*, p. 351, and Burgess, *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples*, p. 62.

21. An explanation can be offered for the extreme simplicity of the *caitya* dormer which appears as a peculiarity of the Kanheri *caitya* hall. It appears that by about the second century A.D. the use of the open *caitya* dormer itself had gone out of vogue in the western Indian architectural tradition, as indicated by the small *caitya* hall in the Gaṇeśaleṇa group at Junnar, which can be dated on the basis of the palaeographical features of its associated inscription to the early part of that century. That *caitya* hall has the usual apsidal plan, the vaulted roof and also the pot-base and pot-and-animal capital pillars for the inner colonnade. It has no open *caitya* dormer, but a blind one, and that too treated indifferently; it has been shown above the entablature. So, as there was no regular tradition of making or decorating the large open *caitya* dormers at the time when the work of completing the verandah of the Kanheri *caitya* hall was taken up (i.e. in Vāsiṣṭhīputra's time), the workers could do no more than plainly trimming of the open *caitya* window which already had existed there right from the time of the first stage of work.

22. Nagaraju, *A Study of Rock-cut Architecture*, p. 313.

* *negamasa* is clearly visible in the estampage of the inscription.
** Add *ti* after this. This letter is clearly seen in the estampage.

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9

The Memorial Stūpa Gallery at Kanheri

SHOBHANA GOKHALE

KANHERI, OTHERWISE known as Kṛṣṇagiri or Kṛṣṇaśaila in ancient inscriptions, is ten km to the south-east of Borivli, a suburb of metropolitan Bombay. The site has 128 Buddhist caves located in lonely but picturesque surroundings. Kanheri is not far from the ancient rich trade centers of Śūrpāraka (*mod.* Soparā), Kalyāṇa and Chaula. It is the only rock-cut monastic settlement in Western India where the cells, water cisterns, dining hall and lecture hall are joined by now worn out flights of rock-cut steps; besides these, there also is a burial-gallery (Figure 1). All these indicate that a large brotherhood must once have lived at Kanheri.

The burial-gallery is a long terrace under the rock shelter in the south-western corner of the Kṛṣṇagiri hill (Plate 94). It is about 1.5 km from the main *caitya* and approachable by rock-cut steps. The front portion of this rock-shelter, facing west, is completely washed away by the monsoon torrents.

The burial-gallery, whose floor is covered with bricks and brick-dust is about 180 m in length. More than a hundred bases of brick *stūpas* in the gallery are of three sizes: 1.80 m, 1.585 m, and 1.35 m in diameter. They are constructed of large flat wedge-shaped bricks. Many stepped *harmikās* made of stone are strewn around the brick foundations. In this gallery, one-third of the distance from the north end is a sixteen-sided polygonal *stūpa* base measuring 6.6 m in diameter. The inner side of the rock shelter above this *stūpa* has traces of a huge canopy. Behind it are three small chambers containing sculptures, but owing to the perishable rock, the sculptures cannot be identified. In all these chambers there are remains of plastering and traces of paintings.

In 1853 E.W. West excavated this stone *stūpa* base, the results published in an excellent report.[1] West described the reliefs of the *stūpa* representing groups of lions, tigers, deer and *kīrttimukhas*. He further pointed out that a panel showing groups of Buddha images alternately teaching and in meditation, in each case with two attendant fly-whisk bearers, is divided by pillars in the Elephanta cave style.

West provided a detailed report on all the sculptural and archaeological remains of the brick *stūpas*, which were erected in the memory of Buddhist monks. But the archaeological remains were not enough to admit any definite conclusion regarding the purpose of the brick *stūpas* and their contribution to the general cultural complex. These remains were examined by scholars such as Fergusson,[2] Burgess,[3] West,[4] and Bhagawanlal Indraji.[5]

In 1975, when I visited Kanheri, I observed a few well-cut stone slabs lying in the valley in front of the burial-gallery. I decided to explore the valley with the help of V.M. Vani to seek new inscriptions. Our efforts were soon rewarded, and nearly twenty new inscriptions of great historical value came to our notice. The inscriptions are epitaphs averaging 25 cm×16 cm in size. They immortalize the names of monks and note their scholastic merits or the stage they had attained in sainthood. They also record the erection of the *stūpas* of monks. These *stūpas* are

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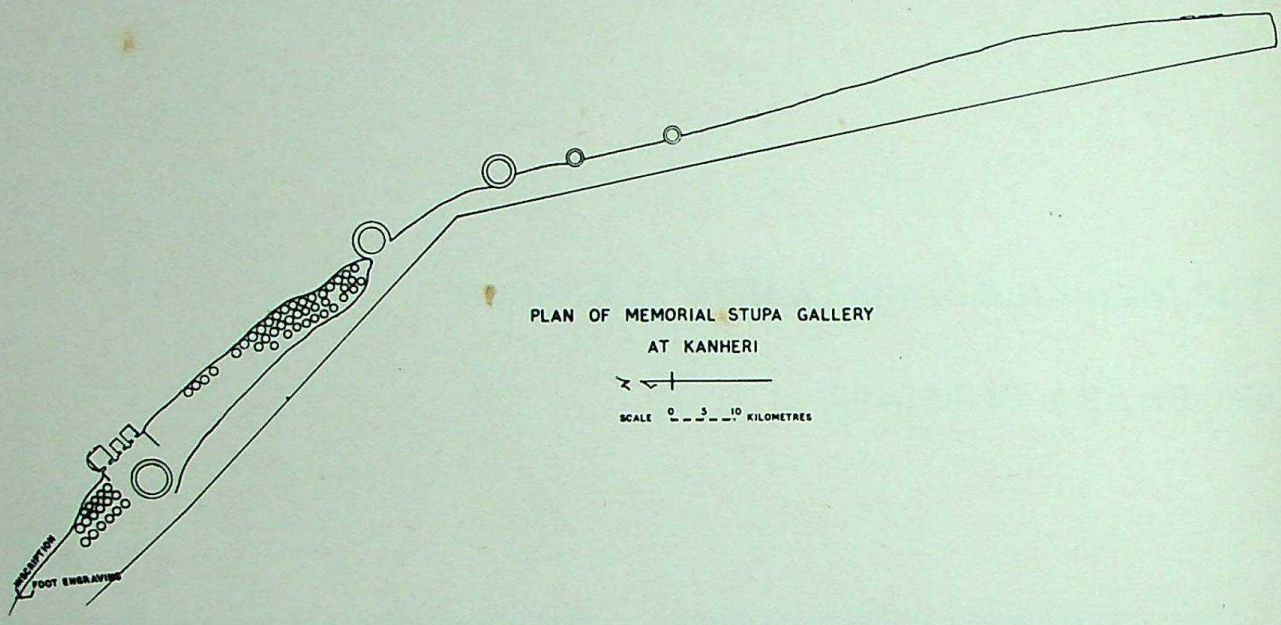

Figure 1. Plan of memorial stupa gallery at Kanheri.

apparently the brick ones today in the burial-gallery. The inscriptions are written in the late fifth- or early sixth-century boxheaded variety of Brāhmī. The language is Prakrit. The characters are closely related to those of Ajaṇṭā and Ghaṭotkaca cave inscriptions. Among these inscriptions, the more significant are as follows:

1. L 1 Therāṇaṁ Āyya Vijaya. (Plate 95)
   L 2 Seṇāṇaṁ Tevijāṇaṁ
   L 3 Arahantāṇaṁ Thūbhaṁ

In the Buddhist tradition, a monk who has attained threefold knowledge is called *tevijja* (i.e. *trivid*). According to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*,[6] the three types of knowledge are: (1) *Pubbenivāsa*—knowledge of three previous existences; (2) *Dibbacakkhu*—Divine vision; (3) *Āsavakhayajñaṇa*—destruction of depravities.

2. L 1 (the)rāṇaṁ (Plate 96)
   L 2 (Ara) hantaṇaṁ Jhāyiṇaṁ thūbham

The inscription records that the Arhat was *jhāyi* i.e. *dhyānī*, a technical term for a special religious experience in an order of mental state. It may be described as *pañcagika dhyāna* (*vitarka, vicāra, prīti, sukha,* and *ekāgratā*) and summarized as mystic, uplifted above attention and reasoning, joyful and easy both in body and mind, suffused with a sense of ease after bliss has passed, and aware of pure lucidity of mind and equanimity of heart.

3. This inscription records that one monk was not only an *ārya, mahān* and *arhat*, but also that he was well-versed in *Ṣaḍabhijñana* and *Praṭisaṁbhidā*. The inscription reads:

   L 1 Therāṇaṁ Āyya Mahāṇaṁ ara (Plate 97)
   L 2 hantāṇaṁ chalabhiṇanaṁ paṭi
   L 3 saṁbhidapāttānaṁ thubha

Chalabhinaṇa, i.e. *Ṣaḍabhijñana* indicates six mental states: *Idhi* (levitation), *dibbasotam* (heavenly ear), *paracitta-vijānanā* (telepathy); and the remaining three given under *tevija* above. A monk who attains these six knowledges is called an *Arhat*. The *Dhammapada*[7] describes the achievement of final emancipation by six knowledges and also notes that it provides *jātikhaya* (freedom from rebirth):

> Pubbenivāsam yo vedi saggāpayam ca passati
> Atho jātikhayam patto abhiña vosito muni
> *Dhammapada* 26.41.423.

The same monk is also described as *Paṭisaṁbhidā-pātta*, that is, having attained *Paṭisaṁbhidā*. There are four kinds of *Paṭisaṁbhidā*: *atthapaṭi-saṁbhidā, dhammapaṭi-saṁbhidā, nirutti-paṭisaṁbhidā*, and *paṭibhaṇapaṭi-saṁbhidā*.

Atthapaṭisaṁbhidā means analysis of the text;

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dhammapaṭi-saṁbhidā means reasoning of the text; *nirutipaṭi-saṁbhidā* implies interpretation of a religious text; and *paṭibhāṇapaṭi-saṁbhidā* means illumination. These are the four powers of penetration into the hearts of people and could be achieved only by *Arhats*. The inscription records that the *bhikṣu* was gifted by two extrasensory powers, *ṣaḍabhiñana* and *paṭi-saṁbhidā*.

4. This inscription reads as follows:

L 1 Therāṇaṁ bhadanata Dāmā (Plate 98)
L 2 ṇaṁ Aṇāgāmiṇaṁ thūbha

For the attainment of Arhathood, a *bhikkhu* has to pass through four stages: *sotāpanna* (a *bhikkhu* who is following the eightfold path), *sakadāgāmi* (a *bhikkhu* who takes only one birth), *aṇāgāmin* (a *bhikkhu* who is freed from rebirth as a human being), and *arhat* (a *bhikkhu* who is liberated from rebirth). Bhadanta Dāmā of this inscription had reached the stage of *aṇāgāmin*.

5. L 1 Theraṇaṁ Āyya I—(Plate 99)
L 2 ndaseṇa-payutāṇaṁ pa
L 3 Bhiṇāṇaṁ arahantāṇaṁ
L 4 Satāṇaṁ thūbhaṁ

The inscription records that the *bhikkhu* was appointed by Indrasena, and the word *Pabhiṇṇa* indicates that the *bhikkhu* belonged to a different school or subsect.

6. L 1 Therāṇaṁ Āyya vahiṇṇā (Plate 100)
L 2 grāṇaṁ arahantāṇaṁ Tila
L 3 pālakāṇaṁ thūbhaṁ

The inscription records that a *stūpa* as erected in the name of Tilapālaka, who belonged to a different school.

7. L 1 ..... nam dhi (Plate 101)
L 2 (mu)Lāṇaṁ arahantā (ṇaṁ)
L 3 ..... thubhaṁ

Although the inscription is partly mutilated, it notably describes the *bhikkhu* as *dhi(ti)mūla*. *Atthasalini*,[8] the commentary on *Dhammasaṅgani*,[9] has described various qualities of a *bhikkhu*:

Cittacetasikanāṁ dhāraṇavasena
Avicche dato va pavatanavasena
Kusulasantanam dharetiti dhiti
dhiti cesa aviṭṭhitakāritā
Atthasalini, 3.285.

A *bhikkhu* who does not deter from work, who does not avoid work, who has full control over his feelings, and who possesses a firm character is called a *dhitimūla*.

8. L1 Therāṇaṁ(Ayya) Nāyeṇaṁ
L2 Arahantaṇaṁ-thū(bham)

In this inscription, the *arhant* is described as *ṇāyena*. According to *patisambhidamaggapali*,[10] there are seventy-three kinds of knowledge. An ordinary *śrāvaka* could achieve sixty-seven categories of knowledge. The remaining six categories could be achieved only by extraordinary *śrāvakas*.

To a *sarvajña*, all knowledge is transparent. In Therāvada, knowledge is considered the supreme quality in man. Knowledge as understood in Buddhism is different from the principle of *ātman* as *brahman* in the Upaniṣads. The mysticism of the Upanisaḍs is absent in Buddhism, but appropriate training of body and mind for achieving truth and excellence as propounded by the Upaniṣads were accepted by Buddhism. This is once again proved by the inscriptions at Kanheri.

The inscription records that Ārya Saṅghananda was a *vasin*. The *Visudhimagga*[11] defines *vasi* as a person who has control over feelings. This control is fivefold: *Avajjanā vasi* (contemplation of *samādhī*), *samāpajjanāvasi* (control in attainment of *samādhī*), *adhiṭṭhāna vasi* (determination for *samādhī*), *uṭṭhanavasi* (emerging out of *samādhī*) and *paccavekhaṇāvasi* (contemplation after *samādhī*).

These new inscriptions provide an excellent clue for dating the numerous brick *stūpas* in the burial-gallery to the late fifth or early sixth century. Two rock-cut *stūpas* in the small niches in the burial-gallery are plain in design. On the back wall of this gallery, there is a small inscription which belongs to the second century A.D. It reads *parigahita* and is recorded together with the Buddha's footprints. This indicates that the funeral ground was in use over a considerable length of time.

What is the justification for this revival? While discussing the monuments of early Kalacuri period, Walter Spink[12] has offered the most eloquent explanation, stating that the awe-inspiring excavation of Elephanta is the fitting symbol of the authority of the Kalacuri King Kṛṣṇarāja. He has pointed out a logical sequence between the abrupt end of the Mahāyāna caves at Ajaṇṭā, which was mainly due to the political unrest caused by the expansionist movement of the

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Kalacuri King Kṛṣṇarāja and resulted in concluding the cultural activities at Ajaṇṭā. Spink, studying comparatively the stylistic features of sculptures, iconographic traditions and architectural details of both Ajaṇṭā and Elephanta, has further shown that the massive Śaivite caves at Jogeśvarī and Elephanta might have been excavated by the craftsmen trained during the Vākāṭaka régime who migrated to the Bombay area after the fall of the Vākāṭakas. These new inscriptions at Kanheri, which are written in the Vākāṭaka pen-style, provide remarkable evidence supporting this hypothesis. As suggested by Spink, Buddhist monks also migrated to Kanheri for asylum. There they received new patronage and encouragement from the Kalacuris, who took great interest in architecture. This is evidenced by the Jogeśvarī and Elephanta caves, which are not far from Kanheri. The Buddhas with inscriptions on Cave 3 are very similar in style to those found at Ajaṇṭā. They suggest that the learned *ācāryas* did not forget their parent site. Under the patronage of the Kalacuris, the activities at Kanheri again resumed with greater vigor in the late fifth century. Thus this period provided Kanheri with the most extraordinary episode in her long history.

Why did the Kanheri artisans opt for the unusual erection of brick *stūpas* in memory of *arhats*? A plausible explanation is provided by the copper-plate inscription dated in the Traikūṭaka era 245 (494/495 A.D.). This copper plate was discovered by Bird in 1839 in the brick *stūpa* immediately in front of the main *caitya* hall.

The copper plate[13] records the construction of a *caitya* made of stone and brick (*ghaṭita-paṣaṇ=-aiṣṭika*) in the name of the Buddha *Daśabalin* at Kṛṣṇagirimahāvihāra by a monk named Buddharuci who hailed from Sindhudeśa, where construction of brick *stūpas* was a common feature. The entire construction was called *caitya*, the worshipful. The brick *stūpa*, which was built in the name of the Buddha, is designated a *caitya*. The brick constructions erected in the memory of learned monks are called *stūpas* in these new inscriptions. It is interesting to note in this connection that S.R. Rao unearthed three furnaces in the excavation at Kanheri. This probably indicates that the bricks required for the *stūpas* were manufactured at Kanheri itself.[14]

CONCLUSIONS

All the inscriptions record the names of Sthaviravādi monks, members of the oldest sect. At Sāñcī there lived Sthaviravādi teachers who were *sutātikas, vināyakas* and *pacanekāyikas*. There some *stūpas* might have been erected in the memory of those teachers, but no separate memorial *stūpa*-gallery survives at Sāñcī[15] or elsewhere.

Earlier memorial *stūpas* in stone had been erected at Bhājā and even at Kanheri. During the fifth century, bricks as well as stone were used for the construction of votive *stūpas* in rock-cut sanctuaries. But the gallery of memorial brick *stūpas* is unique to Kanheri.

The language of the inscriptions is Prakrit. By the end of the fifth century, Sanskrit had taken the place of Prakrit, but why Prakrit was retained in these inscriptions is difficult to ascertain. There is a close similarity between the characters of the epitaphs and inscriptions at Ajaṇṭā and Ghaṭotkaca.

The epitaphs record the names of teachers of high religious achievement. They not only throw light on ancient Buddhist monastic institutions, but also they give evidence for the first time of teachers' traditions in the western Indian caves. This tradition continued even in the early Rāṣṭrakūṭa period. The Kanheri inscription of Pullaśakti,[17] who was a feudatory of Amoghavarṣa I, records a donation to the Buddhist *vihāra* at Kanheri, a part of which was utilized for purchasing books.

The occurrence of the names of Buddhist teachers of this period suggests that the Sthaviravādi monks at Kanheri were greatly honored. The *stūpa*-gallery honoring them was probably erected by artisans who had migrated from the Vākāṭaka region.

The three chambers in the back wall of the gallery symbolically represent *triratnas*, namely Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. It may be noted that in the third chamber, a statement preserved in the *Siṁhanādasutta* has been artistically represented. The Buddha seated on a lion's throne recalls the passage in the *Sutta* stating that in the Saṅgha, the Buddha used to speak in lion's voice:

> Parisāsu Simhanādaṁ nadati
>
> *Majhimanikāya* 1.12.

Spink has suggested that architectural activity was resumed vigorously at Kanheri during the Traikūṭaka régime. After the fall of the Vākāṭakas, the Traikūṭakas became sovereign rulers, for the Surat plates of 490 A.D. mention the king Vyāghrasena as the lord of Aparānta. Traikūṭaka authority continued up to 506

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A.D.[19] But by about 533 A.D., the Traikūṭakas lost their sovereign power and became feudatories of the Kalacuris. The Kanheri epitaphs display the peculiarities of the pen-style of this period. This sequence leads to the conclusion that the brick *stūpa* activity at Kanheri started in the Traikūṭaka period and was at its zenith in the Kalacuri period.

NOTES

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4. J. Burgess, *Report of the Buddhist Cave Temples and Their Inscriptions*, reprint ed.; Varanasi 1964.

5. Bhagawanlal Indraji, *Inscriptions From the Cave Temples of Western India*, reprint ed.; Delhi 1976.

6. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Pali edition, Nalanda 1958, p. 184.

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8. R.D. Vadekar and P.V. Bapat (eds.), *Althasalini*, Poona 1942, 3.285.

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10. *Patisambhidāmagaapāli*: an Encyclopaedia of the Philosophy of the Khuddakanikāya of Suttapīṭaka. Ed., Bhikkhu Jagadishakashyapa, Varanasi 1960.

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12. Walter Spink, "Monuments of the Early Kalachuri Period," *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XLVI (1968), p. 263.

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14. S.R. Rao, "Excavations at Kanheri," *Professor P.B. Desai Felicitation Volume*, Dharwar 1975, p. 45.

15. Sir John Marshal and Alfred Foucher, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, Vol. I (Place and year of publication unspecified), pp. 41, 298.

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18. Shobhana Gokhale, "New Inscriptions from Kanheri," *Journal of Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. V (1978), p. 110.

19. Shobhana Gokhale, "Matvan Plates of the Traikuṭaka King Madhyamasena K256," *Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference*, Poona 1975, pp. 267–70.

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10

The Five Dated Gandhāra School Sculptures and Their Stylistic Implications

KARL KHANDALAVALA

I

IT IS INDEED strange that although thousands of sculptures from Gandhāra and Afghanistan (Figure 1) have come to light, there are only five that bear a date. Even this limited number might have been considered satisfactory in assisting scholars to substantiate or modify their opinions as to the stylistic development of Gandhāran art. But, unfortunately, the dates on these five sculptures differ widely, from low numbers to high numbers, and present a variety of problems which has led to no inconsiderable controversy.

At one time it was thought that the Shāh-jī-kī-Ḍherī *stūpa* reliquary (Plate 102: inscribed) of the British Museum was a gift of Mahārāja Kaniṣka I for the acceptance of the elders of the Sarvāstivādī order of monks and that it bore a date, namely the year 1 of his reign. However, after the reliquary was recently cleaned it was found to bear no date.[1] Thus the strongest argument for ascribing the reliquary to Kaniṣka I can no longer be an obstacle to the contrary theory that the royal personage depicted on the reliquary clad in the usual royal Kuṣāṇa costume, including top boots, must be Kaniṣka II of the Ārā inscription of the year 41,[2] not Kaniṣka I.

Since this royal figure is beardless, it cannot be Kaniṣka I, who is invariably depicted with a heavy, prominent beard on all his numerous coins.[3] Despite the ingenuity of some scholars,[4] who still attribute the reliquary to Kaniṣka I, their suggestions to discount the circumstance that the figure of the royal personage on the reliquary is beardless are far from convincing. The arguments advanced, though superficially projecting a possibility, are on closer examination found devoid of substance. Surely, the royal figure occupying the central position depicts the donor himself and not a sculptor's idyllic representation of the donor or a figment of his imagination. Why would there be a need for capricious images when the ruler who donated the reliquary existed very much in flesh and blood? Equally untenable is the supposition that the royal figure may be Kaniṣka I in his early youth before he had grown a beard. It should not be forgotten that Kujula Kadphises, the first Kuṣāṇa ruler, was more[5] than eighty years of age when he died in about 65 A.D. (the year of his last inscription, namely the Panjtar record of the year 122),[6] and so his son Vima—even if he were born when his father, Kujula, was about twenty-five years of age, not earlier—must have been about sixty years old when Kujula died in 65 A.D. Accordingly, if Kaniṣka I, the son of Vima, was born when Vima was about twenty-five years old, and not earlier, he would have been about forty-five years of age, if not more, when he succeeded Vima in 78 A.D. Was he beardless even at forty-five? Further comment is not necessary. Similarly the argument that the *stūpa* and the *vihāra*, where the reliquary was

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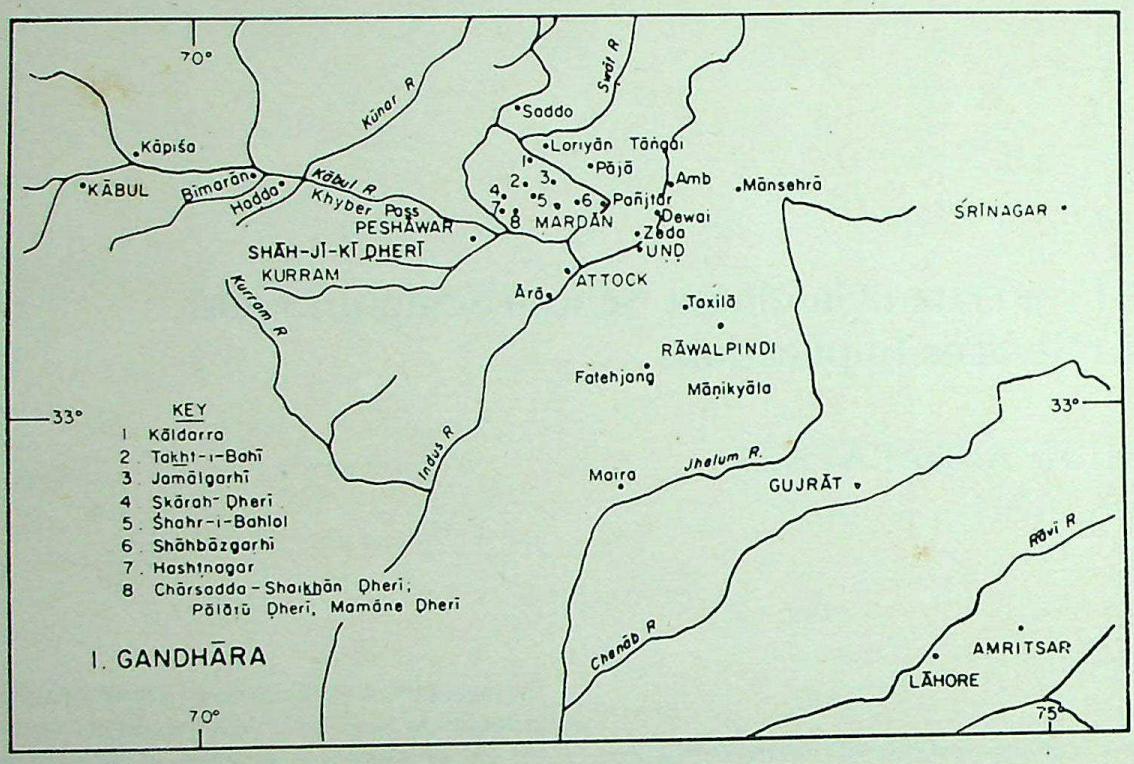

Figure 1.

found, were built by Kaniṣka I does not lead to the conclusion that the reliquary also must have been donated by him. It could have been donated by Kaniṣka II at the time of some repairs, alterations, new constructions or even otherwise as an act of piety.

The inevitable conclusion, therefore, seems to be that the royal portrait on the reliquary is that of Kaniṣka II, a grandson of Kaniṣka I, who ruled, it seems, jointly with Huviṣka though perhaps in a separate part of the Kuṣāṇa empire. One is unable to accept the theory of two Huviṣkas, for which there is no real basis. Many rulers have had long reigns of considerably more than thirty years.[7] Since Kaniṣka II succeeded his father, Vāsiṣka, in 106/107 A.D. (Vāsiṣka's last known date is the Sāñcī inscription of the year 28)[8] and lived until at least 119 A.D. (the year 41 of the Ārā inscription),[9] if not later, the reliquary belongs to the period 106–119 A.D.

The figures of the Buddha and his attendants on the lid of the reliquary, as well as of the ruler himself on the side, suggest that the sculptural art of Gandhāra was still in a stage of development during the reign of Kaniṣka I, Vāsiṣka and Kaniṣka II and that any high technical skill in the sculpturing of figures was still lacking. Of course, it can be suggested that the craftsman of the reliquary in question was not very skilled, though, it may be asked, if there were superior sculptors in his domain, why should a royal donor not have utilized the best artisan available. It may also be suggested that the figures on a small reliquary in metal need not be taken as an indication of the quality of stone sculpture during the same period. But the medium of the reliquary would have afforded scope for fine figure-sculpture in metal had the art of fashioning sculptured figures, of excellence whether in stone or metal, then been in vogue. The point of the foregoing discussion becomes more apparent as the five dated stone sculptures which form the subject matter of the present paper are dealt with in detail.

II

The year 384 appears on the sculptured pedestal of what is known as the Hashtnagar standing Buddha found at Palatu Ḍherī near Hashtnagar in the Charsaddā area. The figure of the Buddha (Plate 103)

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is said to be in worship at the place where it was found. The original head is lost and a head not belonging to the image has been fixed on the body. The loss of the head adds to the difficulties because it could have helped stylistic analysis. However, the body of the standing Buddha and the fashioning of the garment still can afford some guidance on matters of stylistic development, though implicit reliance should not be put on the treatment and position of drapery folds.[10] The sculptured pedestal of the Hashtnagar image (Plate 104), which bears the inscription containing the date, is in the British Museum (accession No. 1890, 11-16-1). Though the figures on the pedestal are somewhat damaged, enough remains to be of assistance in ascertaining if a stylistic sequence can be evolved from the five dated images, subject, of course, to the limitations that beset this pursuit. For this purpose the pedestal figures are more important than the image proper of the headless standing Buddha.

The inscription as read by Sten Konow[11] is as follows:

Text

Saṁ 1 1 1 100 20 20 20 20 4 Proṭhavadasa masasa divasaṁmi paṁchami 4 1.

Translation

Anno 384, on the fifth day of the month Praushṭhapada.

The reading of the date is not undisputed.[12] It has also been read as 284 by Bivar. Since I can express no opinion on the disputed Kharoṣṭhi numerals, one has to rely on the opinions of others, although I am unable to accept the reading 284 for reasons which will hereafter be apparent. The era to which the date 384 is ascribable is the subject of irreconcilable controversy.

I have never taken kindly to the promulgation of various speculative eras, nor to the theory of the "dropped hundreds" ingeniously proposed by van Lohuizen-de Leeuw.[13] Such theories have been put forward due to certain stylistic problems which several dated sculptures from Mathura present. The theory of the "dropped hundreds" cannot be summarily ignored since it affords a possible solution to the enigmatic dates on two of the five sculptures which are dealt with in this paper, the Mamane Ḍherī stele of the year 89 and the Brussels Buddha of the year 5. But there are certain eras whose existence is incontrovertible, and almost all controversial dates can be ascribed to one or the other of these eras, so it is not necessary to rely on speculative eras or on the theory of the "dropped hundreds", though as a last resort this latter theory may have to be adopted. Controversy, however, will still continue as to which of these eras, the existence of which is incontrovertible, is to be employed for ascertaining the dates according to the Christian calendar for the five dated Gandhāran sculptures.

These eras whose existence cannot be questioned and which are relevant to the problem are:

1. The Vikrama era of 57/58 B.C. (hereafter referred to as 57 B.C.)
2. The Śaka era of 78/79 A.D. (hereafter referred to as 78 A.D.)
3. The Gupta era of 319/320 A.D. (hereafter referred to as 319 A.D.)

The Kalachuri-Chedi era of 248/249 A.D. does not pertain to the problems, nor does the Selucid era of 312 B.C., which never was in use nor could have been in use in northwest India during the relevant period. Though once advocated, it is no longer seriously considered.

The speculative era referred to by several writers as being applicable to the Loriyan Tangai, Hashtnagar and Skarah Ḍherī sculptures, is the one often referred to as the "old Śaka era". There is no agreement as to the starting date of this era. The only thing that can be said is that there was some era, by whatever name it may be called, to which the Taxila silver vase inscription dated in the year 191 during the time of Jihoṇika (Zeionises), the Satrap of Chuksa,[14] is attributable. It cannot possibly be related to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. for the obvious reason that it would bring Jihoṇika to the year 134 A.D. That Jihoṇika was a Pārthian is a proposition generally accepted, and in all probability was a *strategos* under Gonḍophārnes, who as is evident from the Takht-i-Bahi inscription of the year 103, was ruling over Taxila in 46 A.D. (103–57) in the 26th year of his reign.[15] That the Takht-i-Bahi inscription of the year 103 is to be reckoned in the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. is indisputable, establishing the use of this era in the northwest. If it is assumed that Jihoṇikā continued to rule as a Satrap in the Taxila region right up to 65 A.D., when Vima Kadphises, the Kuṣāṇa emperor, appears to have conquered Taxila, and further if it is assumed that the year 191 was the last year of Jihoṇika's rule, then the era to which the year 191 has to be ascribed

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would be 191–65=126 B.C. But if Jihoṇika did not rule longer than 46 A.D., which was the last known year of Gondophārnes, then the era to which the year 191 would have to be pushed back to 191–46=145 B.C. It may be even earlier if Jihoṇika's rule ended prior to 46 A.D. There is thus no certainty as to the starting point of the era to which the year 191 of Jihoṇika must be ascribed. All that one can say is that the starting point of that era was between 145 B.C. or earlier and 126 B.C. But quite apart from the fact that the very commencement of the era to which the year 191 of Jihoṇika pertains is speculative, there is no reason to think that this so-called "old Śaka era" continued to be in use in any part of the northwest even long after 65 A.D., the latest possible date to which the year 191 of Jihoṇika can be related. The Khalatse inscription[16] of the year 187, which some writers connect with Vima Kadphises, though the reading of his name is regarded by D.C. Sircar[17] and others as very doubtful, also appears to belong to the same era as the inscription of the year 191 of Jihoṇika. But though this era was used for a Parthian Satrap in the year 191 of that era, and once again near Tibet in the Khalatse inscription of 187, (even assuming that it relates to Vima as a prince ruling jointly with his father Kujūla), nevertheless, the total disappearance of Parthian rule in the northwest took place from *c.* 65 A.D., at the very latest, when Vima commenced his conquest of northern India. Accordingly, it would be farfetched to think that this so-called "old Śaka era", continued to be in use and was employed almost two hundred years later by the donor of the Hashtnagar Buddha of the year 384. So also, neither the donor of the Loriyan Tańgai Buddha of the year 318, nor the donor of the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī of the year 291, could have used this so-called "old Śaka era" in their donatory inscriptions. It is evident that all these three dates, namely 384, 318 and 291, belong to the same era, whatever it be, a proposition that has general acceptance.

The year 318 appears on the pedestal of the Loriyan Tańgai standing Buddha (Plate 105) in the Indian Museum Calcutta (accession No. 4901), the second of these five dated sculptures. The reading of this date has not been questioned. The inscription reads as follows:[18]

Text

L. 1 Sa 111 100 10 4 4 Proṭhavadasa di 20 4 1 1 1
Budhagosakasa Daṇamu(khe)
2 Saghorumasa sadaviyarisa

Translation

Anno 318, the 27 day of Praushṭhapada, gift of Buddhaghoṣa, the companion of Saṁghavarmā.

The head is missing. On the pedestal is a group of figures (Plate 106). As in the case of the Hashtnagar Buddha (Plate 103), the fashioning of the standing Buddha's garments (Plate 105) does afford some guidance on matters of stylistic development, though this factor, relied on by some writers, should not be overstressed when taken by itself. But the figures on the pedestal, despite damage, can yield cogent data for a similar purpose.

The pedestal figures, including that of the seated Bodhisattva, appear to be stylistically earlier than those on the Hashtnagar pedestal. The muscular development seen on the figure of the seated Bodhisattva on the Hashtnagar pedestal is absent in the comparable figure of the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal, nor is it so well conceived and positioned. But the most important feature of the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal is the two devotee figures to the proper left of the seated Bodhisattva. They display marked Pārthian influence in their costumes and stances, features clearly borrowed by the sculptor from rather similar figures on some Pārthian sarcophagi such as one from Palmyra[19] (Plate 107) which is dateable to the third century A.D. This dating conforms well with the dating of the Loriyan Tańgai image, 261 A.D. (318–57). The sculptor of the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal must have been familiar with Parthian sarcophagi. In fact, both Parthian and Roman sarcophagi sculptures did influence the art of Gandhāra. The Roman and Parthian influence has been rightly commented upon by more than óne writer.[20] This influence derived from Parthian art of the third century goes a long way to support the theory that the date 318 of the Loriyan Tańgai Buddha must be referred to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C., thus yielding 261 A.D. (318–57) and not to the so-called "old Śaka era." A careful and detailed comparison of Plate 107,[21] with Plate 106, illustrating the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal, will, demonstrably bear out the conclusion of Parthian influence.

The third of the five dated sculptures, namely the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī (Plate 108) was formerly in the Lahore Museum (accession No. 1625) and is now in the Chandigarh Museum, where it was transferred after the partition of India. The date of its inscription has been generally read as 399, but the late N.G.

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Plate 102. Peshwar. Reliquary of Kaniṣka II from the Shāh-jī-kī-Ḍherī *Stūpa*. Gandhāra style. Peshwar Museum.

Plate 103. Hashtnagar. Standing Buddha. Gandhāra style. Dated year 384. Hindu temple, Rajar, Pakistan.

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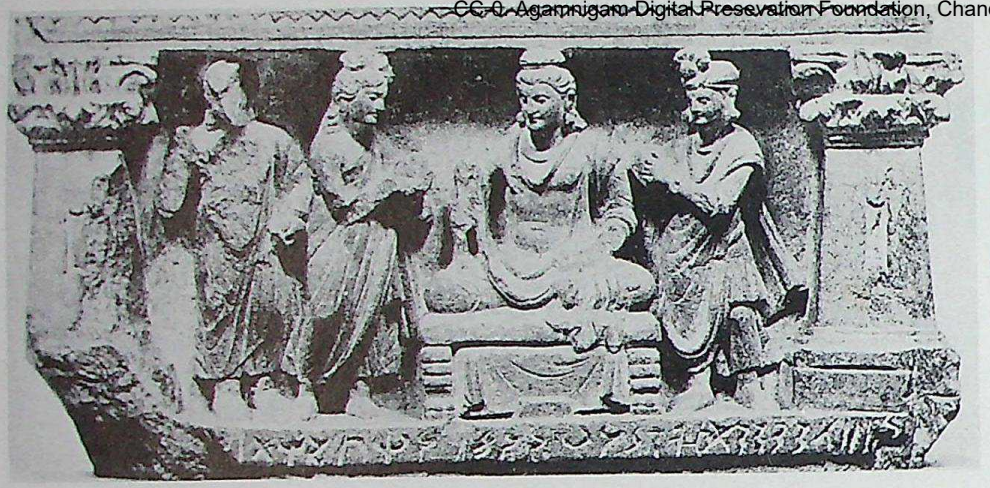

Plate 104. Hashtnagar. Standing Buddha, pedestal. Gandhāra style. Dated year 384. Hindu temple, Rajar, Pakistan.

Plate 105. Loriyan Tańgai. Standing Buddha. Gandhāra style. Dated year 318. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

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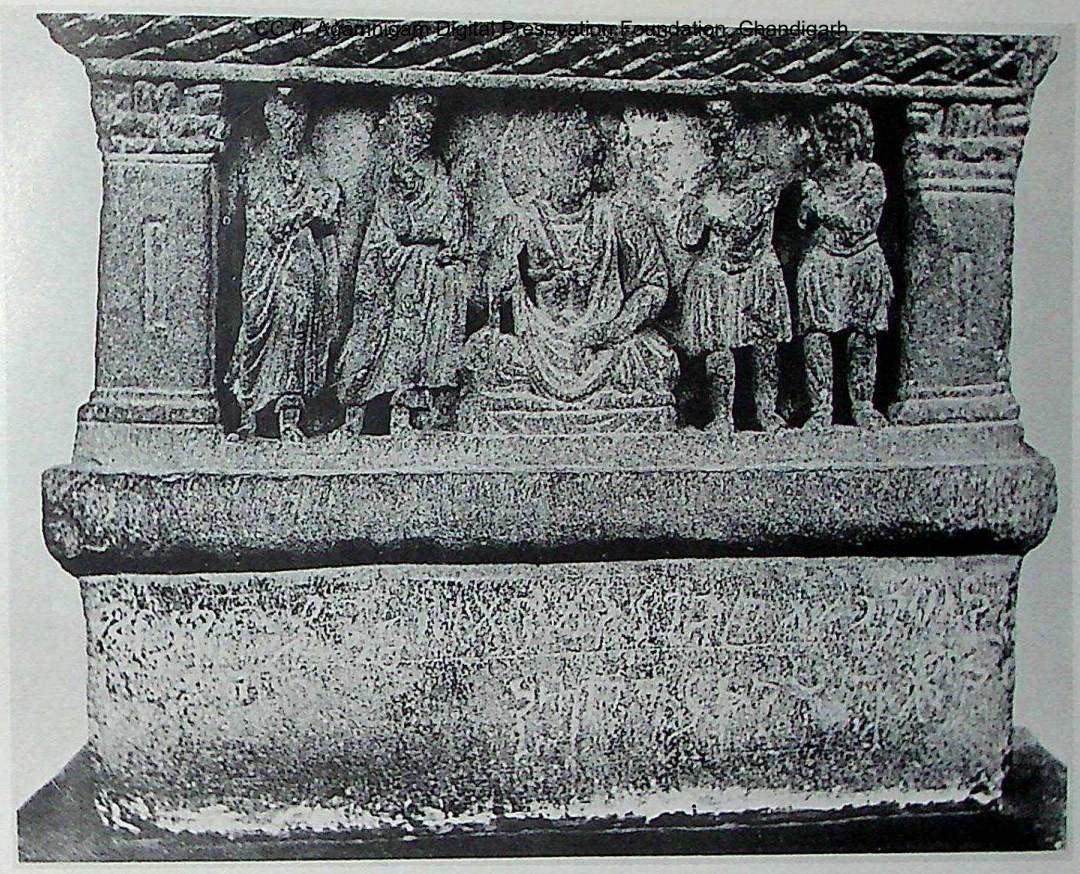

Plate 106. Loriyan Tangai. Standing Buddha, pedestal. Gandhāra style. Dated year 318. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Plate 107. Palmyra. Sarcophagus (after Ingholt).

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Plate 108. Skarah Ḍherī. Hārītī. Gandhāra style. Dated year 291 (and not 399 as generally suggested). Chandigarh Museum.

Plate 109. Hatra. Statue of SPRY, detail. Baghdad Museum.

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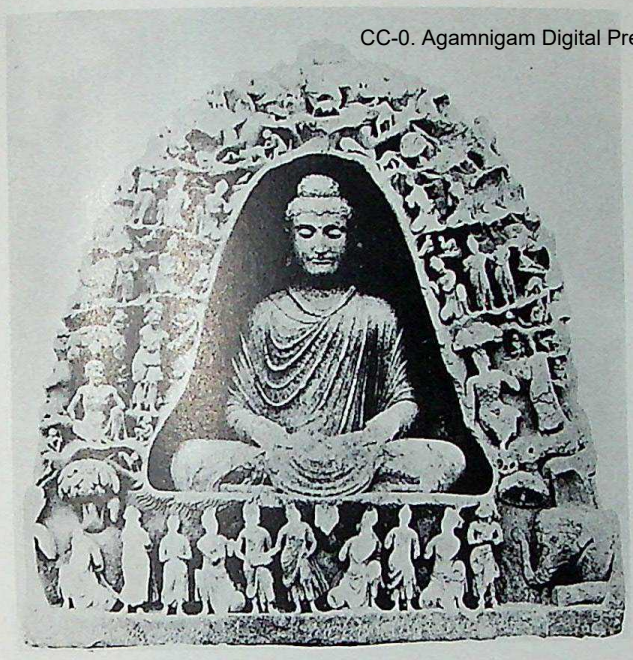

Plate 110. Mamane-Ḍherī (near Charsada). Indra visiting Buddha. Gandhāra style. Dated year 89. Peshwar Museum.

Plate 111. Indra visiting the Buddha. Jaulian, Taxila.

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Plate 112. Buddha with attendant Bodhisattvas. Dated year 4 or 5.Claude de Marteau Collection, Brussels.

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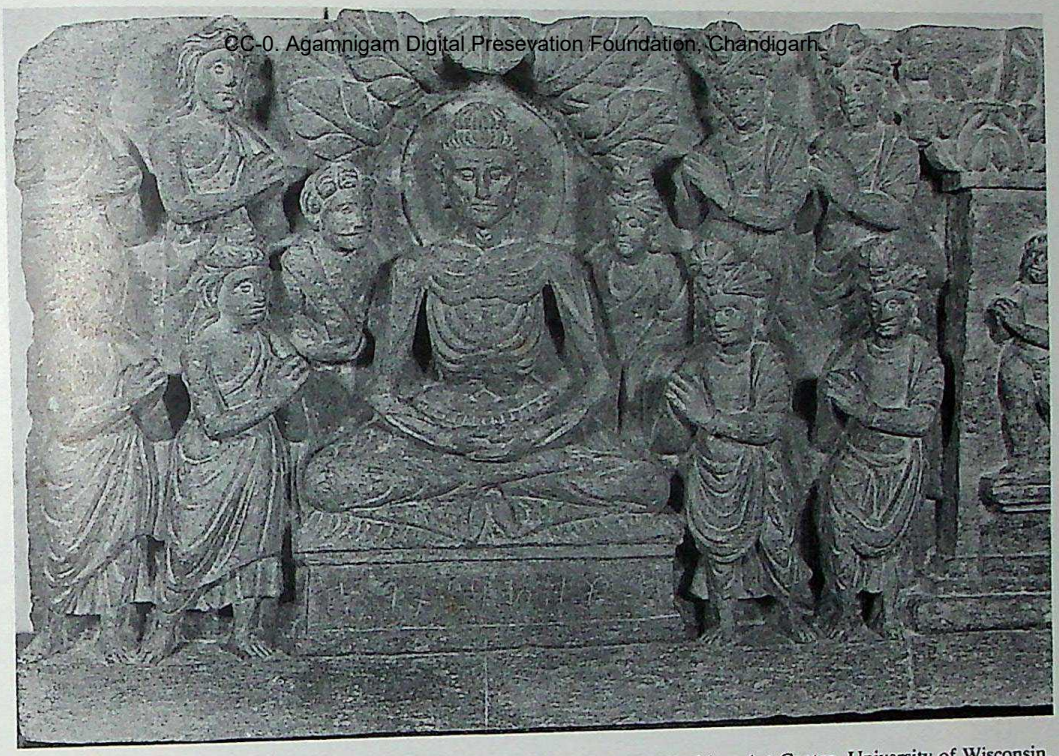

Plate 113. Gandhāra. *Stūpa* base. *c.* Third century A.D. Collection of the Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Plate 114. Gandhāra. Detail of *stūpa* base.

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Plate 115. Bihar. Standing Buddha. *c.* Ninth century A.D. Collection of the Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse.

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Majumdar, a scholar whose opinions on the Kharoṣṭhī script are regarded in India with the highest respect, read the date as 291. The inscription and the various readings are as under:

Text

L. 1. vaṣ(e*)ek(u)na(cha)duśatimae aṣaḍasa masasa divase 20 1 1.
2. s(var)gapade daśama bharadu śa(r)mam artha(e) taṇay(e) sh(u).

Translation

In the four-hundredth year less one (i.e. 399), on the 22nd day of the month Āṣāḍha. In heaven may she carry the tenth. I ask for protection of the children.

Stratton, Boyer and Foucher read the date as:

Vash(e) ekaṇasiti sati-mae
79 100 = 179

Fleet and Konow read the date as:

Vashe(e) ekuṇa—chaduśati-mae
1 (less ?) 400 = 399

Here *chaduśati* is read as *chatuśati*.

N.G. Majumdar read the date as:

Vashe(e) ekaṇavati—du—śati mae
91 200 = 291

He reads the central *ca* as *vati*.

One is disposed to accept the date 291 not because one can pronounce any opinion on the Kharoṣṭhī inscription itself, wherein the date appears in words, but for the following reason: The Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī (Plate 108) is plainly the work of an artist trained in the period of the late Hatra school of sculpture. If the Hārītī is compared with the portrait statue of princess SPRY in the Baghdad Museum (Plate 109), even though the latter is much earlier than the Hārītī, it becomes obvious that certain marked characteristics of Hatra sculpture are present in the Hārītī. These consist of the close folds of the garment covering the body, the broad *hāra* with the long necklace hanging over it and more particularly the embroidery on the sleeves and the treatment of the bodice with ray-like embroidered seams radiating outward all round from the nipples.

The city state of Hatra, an outpost of the Parthian empire, fell to Shāpur I of Persia in 241 A.D. (V.S. 298). Accordingly, if the date of the Hārītī inscription is read as V.S. 399 (342 A.D.), then it is highly improbable that even a hundred years after the fall of Hatra (241 A.D.), some artisan still working in the Hatra manner could have been available to fashion the Hārītī at the Gandhāra site of Skarah Ḍherī. This makes N.G. Majumdar's reading of the year on the Hārītī image, 291, more acceptable than the reading 399. The date 291, a high number date, indicates that the date 318 of the Loriyan Tańgai Buddha and 384 of the Hastnagar Buddha also pertain to the same era. That this era must be the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C., not the so-called "old Śaka era," is a proposition already discussed. Thus, the date 234 A.D. (291–57) for the Hārītī image is arrived at. This makes sense, for one can easily envisage a pedestrian Hatra artisan, before the fall of Hatra in 241 A.D., seeking employment in Gandhāra at Skarah Ḍherī and being commissioned to do some work there for a Buddhist foundation. But this cannot be conceived as happening more than a hundred years after the fall of Hatra.

The well-known Panjtar inscription,[22] which refers to the reign of "Mahārāja Gushaṇa", bears the date 122. There seems little doubt that "Mahārāja Gushaṇa" of the inscription is the Kuṣāṇa ruler Kujūla Kadphises ("Khusaṇasa" of his coins), who consolidated the five tribes of the Yuëh-chih under his sovereign rule, and that the era to which the date 122 pertains is the Vikarama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. The latter proposition is a matter on which all historians are agreed, and the year 122 would thus be equivalent to 64/65 A.D. (122–57). There is no inscription of Kujūla Kadphises later than the year 122; so it may be assumed that in all probability he died in 64/65 A.D. He was more than eighty years old at the time of his death. Kujūla Kadphises, it can be assumed never invaded India, because, according to the Chinese *Later Han Annals*, it was Yen-kao-chen (Vima Kadphises), the son of K'ui-tsiu-K'io (Kujūla), who invaded and conquered northern India. Vima is referred to in the *Annals* as having annexed "Shen-tu-", that is the region on the river Indus. Thus it seems that up to about 65 A.D. the Kuṣāṇas had reached only as far as Panjtar, west of the Indus. The fact that a large number of coins of Kujūla Kadphises were found in Taxila does not establish that he had reached that far.[23] His coins no doubt remained in circulation after his death in *c.* 65 A.D., and since his son Vima expanded his father's conquests and occupied the country near the Indus and then carried his arms to Taxila, Kujūla's coins would quite naturally have been used at Taxila in considerable numbers when Vima first occupied it. In fact, the discovery of a large number of the coins of Kujūla Kadphises at Taxila is, a good reason for thinking that very shortly after the

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death of Kujūla Kadphises, while Kujūla's coinage was still in abundant circulation, Vima Kadphises marched beyond Panjtar first to land near the river Indus (the Sindhu of the Chinese *Later Han Annals*) and shortly thereafter east of the Indus to Taxila. All this must have happened about 65 A.D. Kujūla Kadphises was *more* than eighty years old according to the *Later Han Annals* and therefore may well have been about eighty-five at the time of his demise. If so, his date of birth could be placed near 20 B.C. and his conflict with An-hsi (the Parthian empire) and conquest of Kao-fu (Kabul) be assigned to *c.* 1 B.C. Taxila was under the sovereignty of the Parthian ruler Gondophārnes till about 46 A.D. according to the Takht-i-Bahi inscription of the year 103, i.e. 46 A.D. (103–57) referred to earlier. Thereafter came several Parthian rulers as successors of Gondophārnes, and at the time of the *Periplus* (60–65 A.D.),[24] Parthian princes, it is stated, were constantly fighting each other and driving each other out. This observation of the author of the *Periplus* indicates the breaking up of Parthian rule in the northwest. In consequence of these happenings, Kujūla Kadphises must have marched as far as Panjtar, west of the Indus, sometime prior to *c.* 65 A.D. since the Panjtar inscription of the year 122 (122–57=65 A.D.) is his last record.

The year 136 of the Taxila silver scroll inscription[25] is also, by common accord, referable to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. and therefore would be dated 78/79 A.D. This inscription, it may be inferred, refers to Vima Kadphises, not to his father Kujūla Kadphises, because of the presence of the significant title *Devaputra* in the inscription. This title is not to be found in the Panjtar inscription of the year 122 of Kujūla Kadphises nor on his coins, but it was used by Vima. Further, it may be suggested that the dates of this taxila silver scroll and also the Panjtar inscription of 122 pertain to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. If the era of Kaniṣka I, known as the Śaka era, commenced in 78/79 A.D., as I believe it did,[26] then it follows that 78/79 A.D. was the last year of the reign of Vima Kadphises. Thus the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. was in use in the dominions of Vima Kadphises, and so it can hardly be doubted that it was also in use during the reign of his father Kujūla Kadphises, the "Mahārāja Gushaṇa" of the Panjtar inscription of the year 122, which accordingly would be 64/65 A.D. Vima Kadphises ruled over the greater part of northern India, and a reign of about 14 years (64/65 to 78/79 A.D.) is a perfectly reasonable period within which to effect the conquest and consolidation of his Indian dominions. Vima Kadphises himself did not start any era, and the only firmly established era in use during his rule and that of his father Kujūla Kadphises was the Vikrama *Saṁvat*. Since the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. was prevalent during the rule of Kujūla Kadphises and Vima Kadphises, and is so even to this day. There is no real obstacle in regarding the high number dates in the inscriptions on the Loriyan Taṅgai Buddha, the Hashtnagar Buddha and the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī, all of which come from sites within the dominions of Vima Kadphises, as being referable to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. It is not as though the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. ceased to be in use when the Śaka era of 78 A.D. was commenced with the first regnal year of Kaniṣka I.

It may, however, be queried as to why these high number dates of the Loriyan Taṅgai, Hashtnagar and Skarah Ḍherī inscriptions should not be referable to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. since so many Mathurā inscriptions are referable to that era and since it was also used by the Kardamaka Satraps of the line of Caṣṭaṇa. The answer is twofold. First, if the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī inscriptions of 291 were referred to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., then the image would have been fashioned in 369 A.D. (78+291), 128 years after the fall of Hatra and so too late for a Parthian artisan working in the Hatra style to come to Skarah Ḍherī in Gandhāra. It follows, then, that the other high number dates, namely 318 on the Loriyan Taṅgai Buddha pedestal and 384 on the Hashtnagar Buddha pedestal, also cannot be referred to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. There would, moreover, be a stylistic hurdle to cross if the dates on the pedestals of these two images were regarded as belonging to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., for then they would have to be dated 396 A.D. (318+78) and 462 A.D. (384+78) respectively. These dates are too late in light of Ingholt's view[27] that the highly developed and intricate Mamane Ḍherī stele of Indra's visit to the Indraśaila cave (Plate 110) is much later than the sculptures on the pedestals of the Loriyan Taṅgai and Hashtnagar Buddhas.

The Mamane Ḍherī stele now in the Peshawar Museum (Plate 110) is dated in the year 89, a low number date. The inscription reads as follows:[28]

Text

Saṁ 20 20 20 20 4 4 1 Mā(rgaśi) ras(r)a masi 4 1 iśe kshunami niryaide ime deyadhar(me) Dharmapriena shamanena... (puyae) upajayasa Budha-

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priasa puyae samanuyayaṇa arogadakshinae

Translation

Anno 89, in the month of *Mārgaśirṣa*, the 5. (day), at this term was bestowed this religious gift by the *śramaṇa* Dharmapriya, in honour of ..... in honour of his teacher Buddhapriya, for the bestowal of health on his fellow disciples.

If the era to which it may be referred is the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C., then the date would be equivalent to 32 A.D. (89–57). This is a virtual impossibility because it would mean that a highly developed Gandhāra sculptural style existed in this area even long before Kujūla Kadphises had probed his way to Panjtar, the site of the inscription of the year 122, which must be related to the Vikrama *Saṁvat*, as already stated and thus equated with 64/65 A.D (122–57). Again, if the year 89 of the Mamane Ḍherī stele is regarded as referable to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., then it would mean this stele was fashioned in 167 A.D. (78+89), that is to say 94 years before the Loriyan Taṅgai sculptures and 160 years before the Hashtnagar sculpture. To those who do accept this position as a stylistic possibility, one can only concede that there is no foolproof answer. To what era, then, does the date 89 on the elaborate Mamane Ḍherī stele belong?

Ingholt's treatise, which on the whole contains the most satisfactory stylistic analysis of Gandhāra sculpture to date, ascribes the Mamane Ḍherī stele to the fifth century A.D. and considers the date to be 489 Vikrama *Saṁvat* on the theory of the "dropped hundreds", which would mean 432 A.D. (489–57). While I doubt the validity of the "dropped hundreds" theory, it would nevertheless have to be considered if the theory which I seek to advocate in the present paper with regard to this inscription should be proven to be incorrect. But, in any event, I am in agreement with Ingholt that on stylistic grounds the Mamane Ḍherī stele belongs to the fifth century A.D. It has a feeling of Gupta classicism, particularly when actually viewed in the Peshawar Museum and not merely evaluated from a photograph. The broad upper eyelids drooping as if almost closed, the serene face, the smooth body without any muscular prominences, the elegance and fluidity of the surrounding figures and the technical skills apparent in every part of the composition and in the execution of the stele, tilt me to this view.

The late Dr. Moti Chandra and I have suggested that the date 89 of the Mamane Ḍherī stele could perhaps be referred to the Gupta era of 319, which would mean that it was donated in 408 A.D. (319+89).[29] This fairly coincides with Ingholt's stylistic evaluation of the stele as belonging to the fifth century. While suggesting the Gupta era, I am alive to a query that would arise, whether there exists any evidence that the Gupta era was prevalent in the area of the Mamane Ḍherī sculpture. While there is no such evidence, the suggestion was based on a premise which did not require considering the prevalence or non-prevalence of the Gupta era in the area from which the stele was discovered. All the five dated Gandhāran inscriptions are donative inscriptions;[30] accordingly it may be presumed that the full content of each inscription, including the date, was given to the engraver of the inscription by the donor of the sculpture. The text of each inscription was obviously something very personal to each donor, while the scribe of the text was merely concerned to engrave whatever was required by the donor. There are no means of knowing whether the donor in each case was a resident of the area itself or whether he was a pilgrim from even a distant part of the country. It is well known that donative inscriptions exist at some Buddhist sites in India which establish the fact that monks, pilgrims and devotees traveled far and wide to sacred Buddhist places. Thus donors resident in one area often had inscriptions inscribed in an entirely different and distant place.[31] Accordingly, it seems well within the bounds of reasonable probability that a donor coming to Mamane Ḍherī from an area where the Gupta era of 319/320 A.D. was prevalent would mention the year of his donation according to the era prevalent in that part of the country where he resided. He surely would not leave such an important matter to the engraver and permit the latter to cite the year of the donation with reference to an era prevailing in the area where the engraver was resident. Unfortunately, in none of the five dated donative inscriptions is the name of the ruling king mentioned, nor the dynasty, nor even the place of residence of the donor. Had such information been available, the problems which have arisen would probably have been resolved.

The Mamane Ḍherī stele, even more so than a related stele from Jaulian (Plate 111), a site where the sculptures belong to a late date, is endowed with subsidiary figures possessing a sinuous grace and elegance of movement which removes it from the

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Loriyan Taṅgai and Hashtnagar pedestal figures by a considerable period of time. The progression of style is so marked that if the Loriyan Taṅgai sculpture dates 261 A.D. (318–57), there is no difficulty in ascribing the Mamane Ḍherī relief to 408 A.D. (319+89). In contrast to the Loriyan Taṅgai and Hashtnagar sculptures, the Mamane Ḍherī stele is fashioned in a somewhat classical mold, which brings to mind in some ways early Gupta sculpture.

The fifth dated sculpture came to light only recently and has been published by J.C. Harle.[32] It belongs to a Brussels art dealer, M. de Marteau. Its provenance is not known, but according to Harle it is reported to have come from near Peshawar. It belongs to the group labeled as "The Great Miracle of Śrāvastī" (Plate 112). The material is fine grained gray schist, while the workmanship is skilled. The Buddha is seated under a canopy of stylized foliage which is supposed to represent a tree. The Buddha's seat has been appropriately referred to by Harle as an artichoke-like lotus with the lowest row of petals turned downwards as though they were intended to be seried supports to the seat.[33] The fashioning of the foliage as well as the lotus seat, as also of the figures to be presently described, betokens an advanced stage of sculptural skill. Though forcefully executed, the figures in this sculpture lack the grace, suppleness, and movement of those of the Mamane Ḍherī stele. So also the Buddha figure of the Brussels sculpture, with its somewhat raised breasts and thick-set body, lacks the refinement of the seated Buddha from Mamane Ḍherī. This standing Bodhisattvas, one on either side of the Buddha, of the Brussels sculpture are also thick-set with somewhat raised breasts and muscular torsos, and are rigidly frontal in pose. At the back, on either side of the plain halo, the crowned Indra and Brahmā are to be seen. The Kharoṣṭhī inscription on its base has been read and translated by J. Brough of Cambridge University as follows:

> Sa(m)4(5?) phagunasa masasa di paṁcami budhanaṁdasa trepiḍakasa daṇamukha madapidarana adhvadidana puyaya Bhavatu
>
> In the year 4[or 5], on the fifth day of the month of Phālguna; the pious gift of Buddhānanda learned in the three *piṭakas*: may it be for the honouring of his deceased(?) father and mother.

Harle says that the Kharoṣṭhī characters are of the period of Kaniṣka I and his two successors. Palaeographical considerations and characteristics are left out of reckoning, for they can be notoriously misleading and are usually of little value in dating sculptures except on a very broad basis of time. Where stylistic features conflict with the palaeographical evidence, the former are much to be preferred in arriving at conclusions as to the period of a particular sculpture. The wide differences of opinion amongst epigraphers themselves need not be elaborated as for instance with regard to the famous Hathigumphā inscription of Khāravela and the Nāneghāṭ inscription.

As in the case of the Loriyan Taṅgai, Mamane Ḍherī and Skarah Ḍherī sculptures, the inscription on the Brussels Buddha is donative. But what is intriguing is the mention of the date as the year 4 or 5. It is pertinent to observe, once more, that in none of the five dated Gandhāra sculpture inscriptions is the name of any king mentioned; in several Mathurā sculptures, however, the name of the king, for instance Kaniṣka I or Huviṣka, is mentioned specifically along with the date, leaving no doubt as to the era to which the sculpture should be referred. Harle opines with regard to the Brussels sculpture that it can with some confidence be stated that the year refers to the era of Kaniṣka I, which would mean that the sculpture was executed in 83 A.D. (78+5). To arrive at such a conclusion it becomes necessary to conclude that this sculpture is earlier by 178 years (261–83) than the Loriyan Taṅgai sculpture and 244 years (327–83) earlier than the Hashtnagar sculpture. Such a position is bound to be highly controversial. It would mean that at the very beginning of Kaniṣka I's reign, there was already in existence a highly developed school of Buddhist sculpture in Gandhāra. There does not seem to be any archaeological or other evidence of this, unless the Brussels Buddha of the year 5 is attributed to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. which is not possible, and which process would be begging the very question to be answered. In fact, the date of the Brussels Buddha would be referable to the Gupta era and would accordingly be 319+5=324 A.D.

Of course, it may be said, with considerable justification that no inscription of the Gupta era with a date as early as the year 5 exists. In this connection, however, it has to be remembered that in all probability Candragupta I himself founded and proclaimed a regnal era to be reckoned from the first year of his coronation,[34] and this continued as the Gupta era in the reign-periods of his successors. Thus, it would not be surprising if a monk from a place where the Gupta era had been proclaimed and who traveled to

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Gandhāra on a pilgrimage in the fifth year of Candragupta's reign instructed the engraver to record the year 5 on his donative inscription.

The date thus arrived at, namely 319/320 A.D. +5=324/325 A.D., is close to the date of Hashtnagar Buddha which is 384–57=327 A.D. This accords with the evidence of style, for both the Bodhisattva on the Hashtnagar pedestal and the Brussels Buddha adhere to the same stylistic idiom, and only a period of three years separates them (327–324). Since Ingholt utilizes the theory of the "dropped hundreds" with regard to the year 89 on the Mamane Ḍherī stele, it is assumed that he would apply the same theory to the year 5 on the Brussels Buddha. In that event, the Brussels Buddha would be 405−57 A.D. =348 A.D. Thus the Brussels Buddha would be eighty-four years earlier than the Mamane Ḍherī stele (489–57), which Ingholt assigns to the fifth century, regarding the date as 432 A.D. On the basis of present reckoning, the Mamane Ḍherī stele would be 319/320 A.D.+89=408/409 A.D., which would place it in the early fifth century. Thus both Ingholt and I regard the Mamane Ḍherī stele on grounds of style as a fifth century sculpture. The difference is that while Ingholt, to justify his stylistic evaluation, resorts to the theory of the "dropped hundreds", I, in order to justify a similar stylistic evaluation, resort to the theory of the Gupta era.

The argument in favour of the above points of view is that the Mamane Ḍherī image is considerably later on stylistic consideration than the Hashtnagar Buddha and the Brussels Buddha; therefore the date 89 of the Mamane Ḍherī stele cannot be referred to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., while the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C. is totally out of question. Moreover, since on stylistic evaluation, that there cannot be a wide difference in dating between the Hashtnagar Buddha and the Brussels Buddha, the year 5 in the inscription on the Brussels Buddha cannot be referred to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., which would yield for it an impossibly early date, namely A.D. 78+5=83 A.D., far earlier than 327 A.D., the date of the Hashtnagar Buddha inscription is referred, as it must be, to the Vikrama *Saṁvat*.

III

I dealt with the Shāh-jī-kī-Ḍherī reliquary at length to fortify the viewpoint that even in the first quarter of the second century A.D., in the reign of Kaniṣka II of the Ārā inscription of the year 41, the art of Gandhāra had not progressed, at least not in the area to which the five dated sculptures belong, to that level of technical skill which is seen in the Hashtnagar and Brussels Buddha sculptures. Accordingly, it does not seem possible to regard the year 5 on the Brussels Buddha sculpture as referring to the Śaka era of 78 A.D., which would entail the conclusion that by the fifth year of Kaniṣka I, namely 83 A.D. (78+5 A.D.), a high degree of technical skill had been attained in the sculptural output of Gandhāran art. Once the premise is accepted that the date of the Hashtnagar Buddha, namely the year 384, pertains to the Vikrama *Saṁvat* of 57 B.C., then it is not possible to accept the viewpoint advocated by Harle and also Fussman[35] that the date of Brussels Buddha is 78+5=83 A.D. Since Skarah Ḍherī, Loriyan Taṅgai, Hashtnagar, Mamane Ḍherī, Shāh-jī-kī-Ḍherī near Peshawar and Peshawar itself are all within a fairly compact area, one may reasonably suggest that the style of Gandhāran sculpture, at least in that limited area, had some uniformity in its development. On that basis, it can be assumed that the Loriyan Taṅgai Buddha and its pedestal sculpture indicate the style prevailing in the third quarter of the third century A.D., and that the Hashtnagar Buddha and its pedestal sculpture as well as the Brussels Buddha composition indicate the style prevailing in the late first and second quarters of the fourth century A.D., while the Mamane Ḍherī stele indicates the style of the early fifth century A.D. It may be that even in this area there were other schools of Buddhist sculpture which differed in presentation and technical excellence from the types of the five dated sculptures which have been considered. Owing to lack of evidence, however, no definite assertions can be made on this possibility. But it can at least be concluded that such Gandhāran sculptures as are stylistically similar to the five dated ones discussed can be similarly dated, always allowing for a margin of error because a particular stylistic trend may have continued for even a quarter of a century.

The final conclusion is that the chronology of the above dated five sculptures and the datable reliquary is as follows:

1. The Shāh-jī-kī Ḍherī reliquary– 106 107 to 119 A.D.
2. The Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī—324 A.D. (year 291–57).
3. Loriyan Taṅgai Buddha and pedestal sculpture—261 A.D. (year 318–57).
4. The Brussels Buddha relief—324 A.D. (year 5+319).

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5. The Hashtnagar Buddha and pedestal sculpture—327 A.D. (year 384–57).

6. The Mamane Ḍherī stele—408 A.D. (year 89+319).

With regard to items 4 and 6, there can conceivably be somewhat different dates if the theory of the "dropped hundreds", basically not favoured were regarded as acceptable.[36] On that basis item 4 would be 348 A.D. (405–57), and item 6 would be 432 A.D. (489–57). One more aspect pertaining to the Brussels Buddha relief may be noted, namely the presence of the crowned Indra and the god Brahmā attending on the Buddha along with the two Bodhisattvas. It is indeed doubtful if this advanced iconography could have existed in the fifth year of the reign of Kaniṣka I.

I have limited the scope of this paper to a narrow issue. I do not seek to make pronouncements on the development of Gandhāra sculpture in general outside the limited geographical area to which the five dated sculptures and the reliquary belong.

I have likewise avoided discussion on the influence of Roman, Hellinistic, Parthian and Iranian art as far as general features of Gandhāran art are concerned, limiting the inquiry to specific Hatra influence on the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī and general Parthian influence on certain figures of the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal as these matters directly affect the problem of the dated sculptures being dealt with. Whatever stylistic comparisons have been made are also limited to the five dated sculptures and the reliquary, *inter se*. Even in the area to which the five dated sculptures and the reliquary belong, I do not presume that the stylistic development of Gandhāran sculpture could not have followed trends other than those indicated by the dated works. All I intend to stress is that if there be a sculptural work from the area under consideration and which is stylistically comparable to any of the five dated sculptures or the reliquary, then such work can be assigned an approximate date near the time of any one of the dated works to which it is most closely related. Since a very considerable body of sculpture has been discovered at various sites in the area under consideration, the five dated sculptures and the reliquary can be useful sources for dating such discoveries. It is not, however, possible by this method to work out a chronology of Gandhāran art, particularly of sculpture which was discovered at sites outside the area where the dated works were found. Since, as M. Bussagli has rightly remarked, there always existed contrary aesthetic conceptions within the whole of Gandhāran art. The theory of the "dropped hundreds" seeks one way out of difficult problem caused by inconsistencies between the engraved dates and considerations of style. So also the theory of the Gupta era with regard to two of the dated sculptures is open to similar criticism. But as long as there are no examples of Gandhāra sculpture where similar enigmatic dates with low numbers are accompanied by the name of the ruler in whose reign they were made, no definite solution to the problem can be found.[37]

NOTES

1. B.N. Mukerjee, "Shāh-jī-kī-Ḍherī Casket Inscription," *British Museum Quarterly*, Vol. XXVIII, Nos. 1–2 (1964), pp. 39–46.

2. Sten Konow, *Kharoshthi Inscriptions—with the exception of those of Aśoka, C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, Calcutta 1929, pp. 135–138.

3. John M. Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967 Pl. II—for coins of Kaniṣka I.

4. K. Walter Dobbins, *The Stupa and Vihara of Kanishka I*, Asiatic Society, Calcutta 1971, where the arguments in favor of Kaniṣka I are summarized.

5. *The Later Han Annals*, The fact that he is referred to as *more* than eighty years of age suggests that he was considerably over eighty.

6. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 70.

7. The earliest date of Huviṣka is the year 28 and his last date is the year 60. The earliest date of his successor, Vāsudeva I, is 64.

8. Heinrich Lüders, *Mathura Inscriptions*, Göttingen 1961, p. 63.

9. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, pp. 162–165.

10. Several writers are apt to emphasize these features unduly.

11. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 117.

12. A.D.H. Bivar, "Hārītī and the Chronology of the Kuṣaṇas," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. XXXIII (1970), pp. 10–21.

13. J.E. van Lohuizende Leeuw, *The 'Scythian' Period*, Leiden 1949, p. 235.

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14. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 81.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
17. D.C. Sircar, " The Kushāṇas," *The Age of Imperial Unity*, Bombay 1953, p. 139.
18. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 106.
19. Harald Ingholt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, New York 1957, Fig. VI, 3.
20. B. Rowland, "The Revised Chronology of Gandhara Sculpture," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. XVIII (1936), p. 387; Alexander Soper, "The Roman Style in Gandhara," *The Journal of American Archaeology*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Oct. 1951).
21. In both sculptures the short-skirted top garments falling in folds, its slight depression between the legs and the waist girdle can be seen. Moreover the wig-like hair seen in Parthian sculptures is also to be seen quite clearly in the original figure (in the Indian Museum) to the extreme left (proper) of the seated Bodhisattva in the Loriyan Tańgai pedestal.
22. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 67.
23. John Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol. II, Cambridge 1951, p. 785.
24. Karl Khandalavala, "The date of the Karle Chaitya," *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 3–4 (1956–57), pp. 11–26.
25. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 70.
26. Karl Khandalavala, "An Inscription of the Year 11 of Castana and its Implications", *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. LII, Pts. II & III, p. 301.
27. Ingholt, *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, p. 34.
28. Konow, *C.I.I.*, Vol. II, Pt. 1, p. 171.
29. Karl Khandalavala and Moti Chandra, *Miniatures and Sculptures from the Collection of Late Sir Cowasji Jehangir*, Bombay 1965, p. 13.
30. The Hashtnagar pedestal inscription, though fragmentary, must also have been a donatory one.
31. For instance donors from Kañchī in south India have donated images in the Kurkihār monastery in Bihar.
32. J.C. Harle, "A Hitherto Unknown Dated Sculpture from Gandhara: A Preliminary Report," *South Asian Archaeology 1973*, Leiden 1974, pp. 128 ff.
33. An identical lotus seat is seen in a Gandhāra sculpture in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.
34. R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Classical Age*, Bombay 1962, p. 4.
35. Gerard Fussman, "Documents Epigraphiques Kouchans," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extreme-Orient*, Vol. LXI (1974), pp. 54–58.
36. G.S. Gai, "Mathura Jaina Inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa Period, A Fresh Study," *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, Ahmedabad 1975, pp. 81–86.
37. I wish to express my thanks to Shri Sadashiv Gorakshkar, Director, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay for the help rendered and in particular for the discussion on the reading of the date on the Skarah Ḍherī Hārītī.

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11

A Note on Two Inscribed Sculptures in the Elvehjem Art Center of the University of Wisconsin, Madison

A.K. NARAIN

I

The Elvehjem Art Center possesses a fine collection of Indian miniatures gifted by Mr. and Mrs. E.C. Watson of California but has only a small number of Indian sculptures. About a dozen are currently on display. Of these, only two bear short inscriptions. One is from the collections of Mr. and Mrs. Watson; the other formerly belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse.

The first one (Plate 113), from the Watson collection, is part of a frieze probably from a *stūpa* base (height 23.5 cm, width 71.75 cm, depth 8.25 cm). The material is schist and the find spot is unknown. Stylistically it belongs to the Gandhāran school.

The frieze depicts two scenes from the life of the Buddha divided by a pilaster. The one in the right segment depicts the Buddha's confrontation with Māra; it carries no inscription. But the one in the left, which depicts the Great Struggle for Bodhi, bears a small epigraph (Plate 114).

The sculpture shows the emaciated-to-bones body of Siddhārtha seated cross-legged on a small platform under a tree while engaged in *tapas*. To his immediate left and right are two three-quarter figures of attendants. There are also full length figures of four mendicants (*parivrājakas*) with matted hair on the left and of four householders *gahapatis* (i.e. *gṛhapatis*) well dressed and wearing turbans, on the right. Except the two attendants, all figures have hands folded in worshipful gestures. The mendicant figures may be identified as Koṇḍañña and his company, who waited upon Gotama in great expectation but left, only rejoining him after the Bodhi. They became the well-known *pañca-vargīya bhikkhus*, who received the Buddha's first sermon.

There is a small epigraph on the platform; it seems to consist of eleven letters in rather an unusual type of Kharoṣṭhī, the writing being imperfect. The epigraph contains some unusual form of letters and signs for medial vowels. Palaeographically I would prefer to date it in the later Kuṣāṇa period or even later, i.e. in the late third or early fourth century A.D. Provisionally I read the inscription as follows:

Na-ha-ni-tha (tho) -ya-ṇa ḍa(ḍe)-ya tha (thu)-a-(?)

This, in translation, would be:

(This)(?)(is) the gift (of the) Nahaṇitha (tho) yanas (or Nahaṇitha (tho) yana brethren).

II

The second piece (Plate 115) is from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse of New York. It was first shown in an exhibition of Indian Sculpture held at the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, in 1963, and was published in the catalogue issued on the occasion. It was received by the Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin in 1972.

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This sculpture of the Buddha in *abhaya mudrā* is in carved basalt, 52 cm in height. Stylistically it seems early Pāla in date. There is an inscription starting from about the middle point at left and ending at about the middle point at right of the *prabhāvali* frame.

The sculpture represents the Buddha, wearing a *saṅghāṭī* with symmetrical folds, standing in a relaxed manner, on a lotus projecting from the pedestal. The right hand is shown in the *abhaya mudrā* and the left is grasping an end of the *saṅghāṭī*. The right foot is slightly advanced, and though the figure is facing to the front, the body is turned slightly to the left. The sense of gentle movement is conveyed by the soft fluttering ends of the robe falling from the wrists. The figure of the Buddha in the stela is flanked by two smaller figures. At the left of the stela is a female supporting a basket on the head with one hand and holding an object in the other. She seems to be moving away from the Buddha though looking admiringly in his direction. At the right is a male figure wearing garland, necklace and *kuṇḍala* and holding a sword, apparently walking in the direction of the Buddha. The stela is decoratively bordered by tiny curved flames representing *prabhāvali*.

The inscription is in the Brāhmī-Devanāgarī script of about the ninth century A.D. To my knowledge, it has not been read before. It is blurred ir the beginning and at the end but most probably consists of 46 letters. The major portion, which is fairly neatly carved, reveals that it contains the well-known Buddhist formula, *ye dharma hetu prabhava* etc. I read the epigraph as follows:

> ye dha rmmā he tu pra bha vā he tum te sā nta thā ga to hya va da tte (sā) (ñca) yo ni ro dha e va mvā dī ma hā sra ma ṇah|de ya dha rmmo ya [mma? (hā?)] kā sya pa sya‖

The name of the donor is thus Mahākāśyapa.

This is, on the whole, a beautiful piece of art and should be ranked as one of the finest examples of the early Pāla style. Although its find-spot is not recorded, it seems to have come from the Magadha region of the Pāla Kingdom.

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II

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12

Epigraphy and Indian Art and Architecture

K.V. RAMESH

CULLING TECHNICAL information on Indian art and architecture from none too scarce epigraphical sources is an exacting process, necessitating the drudgery of scanning an endless number of records of diverse periods, areas, scripts and languages in which most often the references to monuments are only incidental. The most common data encountered in inscriptions pertain to dates, significant since without these definite points, the history of Indian art and architecture would at best be a guess work, leaving many gaps while trying to reconstruct a picture of the origin, development and decline.

In the case of a fairly large number of monuments, the dates of their construction are attested by inscriptions found *in situ*. Even where such direct evidence is not available, inscriptions, particularly those giving details of refurbishment or of grants made for worship, maintenance and repairs, often help fix the upper limits of the dates. For instance the discovery of a fragmentary pillar inscription from Amarāvatī[1] of the third century B.C., with its text bearing close resemblances to Aśokan style and diction, fixes the upper limit but does not furnish the clinching evidence in support of those who argue that the famous *stūpa* of this site was patronized by Aśoka himself.

Even inscriptions which are no longer *in situ* or merely recollect earlier events occasionally lead to important architectural sites. A striking illustration is provided by the Wāḷa or Wāḍa inscription[2] of the Koṅkaṇa Maurya ruler *Dharmamahārāja* Sukētuvarmā, engraved on a slab now preserved in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. It records the installation of the deity Koṭīśvara in a temple (*sthāna*) at the tenth *nāḍikā* of the night of the full-moon day of Vaiśākha in the Śaka year 322, i.e. 400 A.D. Since no details regarding the provenance of this inscription were available, it was merely suggested in the concerned *Annual Report* that the find-spot may have to be located somewhere in the Saurashtra region. Since Saurashtra was outside the realm of the Koṅkaṇa Mauryas, I consulted the 19th-century Gazetteers of the coastal districts of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency over which the members of Sukētuvarmā's family are known to have ruled. In the Thana District Gazetteer of 1882, I found an explicit reference stating that the inscription of Sukētuvarmā was originally discovered at Wāḍa "in the north of Thāṇā."[3] The Gazetteer further makes some revealing remarks on the historical vestiges then extant on the site:

> The only other traces of former greatness are a ruined Hindu temple of Khaṇḍēśvar, built of stones without mortar, a few dismantled tombs, a ruined mosque, and a ruined temple of Hanumān. The ruins of the Hindu temple are about fifty yards east of the māmlatdārs office. Its foundations are sixty feet by twenty-seven and the whole is formed of huge blocks of stones with the usual joints for iron or wooden clamps. The shrine still stands with an altar inside. Over the door is a small naked sitting figure, with the hands crossed on the lap, and what looks like a sacred thread on

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the left shoulder. The figure is not worshipped. Among the ruins is a pillar capital with a well-cut cobra, with expanded hood.[4]

One probability which emerges through a correlation of the information in the Wāḍa inscription with that given in the Gazetteer is that the Khaṇḍēśvara temple is the same as the Koṭīśvara temple. Now specialists in Indian architecture must examine the remains of Wāḍa to study what appears to be the earliest precisely datable structural temple in the country.

Much farther north, at the very fringes of the Himalayas, is the tiny village of Paleṭhā in the Devaprayāg Tahsil. On a field just behind two small and compact stone temples, more or less fully buried under landslides, is a stone inscription[5] engraved in northern characters of about the seventh century A.D. One learns from this inscription, composed in excellent Sanskrit prose and verse, that a certain Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara Kalyāṇavarmā built a stone temple there for the Sun god:

bhūtyai vaṁśasya śailaṁ viṣaya-parigataṁ
bhūmipālena bhaktyā
ten-aitad-dhama Bhānoḥ suvihita-vibhavaṁ
karitaṁ kīrtti-bhājā

The buried temples are possibly of the period to which Kalyāṇavarmā's inscription belongs. Thus if clearance is done at Palēṭhā, a couple of seventh-century Himalayan temples, one of them dedicated to the Sun god, is likely to be revealed.

Similarly, modern Lakṣmeśvar (*anc.* Puṛigeṛe, Dharwar District, Karnataka) houses a number of temples which are now in different stages of disrepair and mostly assigned to the period of Cāḷukyas of Kalyāṇa. But there is epigraphical evidence that village boasted of five temples even during the Bādāmi Caḷukya period. Direct evidence is furnished by the Shiggaon plates[6] of Vijayāditya, issued in 707 A.D., according to which that emperor's sister Kuṁkumadēvī supported construction of Jaina *basadi* at Puṛigeṛe. In the Śaṅkha-basti, another Jaina temple in that village, are found tenth century recopies of some early inscriptions,[7] one of them of the reign of Ereyamma, i.e. Pulikeśin II (609–42 A.D.). This early seventh-century inscription,[8] while delineating the boundaries of a land-gift, mentions lands belonging to the temples of the gods Rāmeśvara, Hōbeśvara and Sindeśvara, and of the goddess Bhaṭāri. Although, the superstructures of many of these temples appear to have undergone thorough renovation in the tenth century, a reëxamination of these monuments may reveal early Bādāmi Caḷukya remnants at least at the plinth or foundation levels.

Inscriptions also sometimes provide information on temple forms besides revealing architectural terms current in Sanskrit as well as in the vernaculars. For example, an inscription, originally discovered somewhere in the Mēvāḍ region of Rājasthān and now kept in Udaipur, records the consecration of a Viṣṇu temple on 2nd November, 661 A.D.[9] The second half of the verse, alluding to the construction of the temple, reads:

taran=saṁsār-ābdhiṁ viṣama-viṣaya-grāhakalilaṁ
sthiraṁ pot-akāraṁ bhavanam=akarot=Kaiṭabharipoḥ

Only the identification of the temple to which the inscribed slab belonged will clarify whether the verse merely metaphorically alludes to the temple as a means to cross the troubled sea of worldly existence or whether the form of the temple did really resemble the shape of a boat.

Similar is the reference to two temples as *devadroṇis* in the Dabok inscription of 813 A.D.[10] of the time of Dhavalappadēva. The relevant passage reads:

ātmīya-sva-kārita-devadroṇī-pratiṣṭhāpitasya
dev-ādhideva-Maheśvara-sya 1 tathā ca
pūrvvatara-vaidya-Yaśōdēva-kārita-
devadroṇī-pratiṣṭhāpitāyā Ghaṭṭavāsinī-
nāma-śrī-Durggādevyā arddha-ārddhataḥ. . . .

Though the word *droṇi* is not given the meaning of "boat" in Sanskrit lexicons, it did have that sense in common parlance as proven by *toṇī*, *doṇī* and *done*, its Dravidian *tadbhavas*, standing for boat in Tamil, Kannada and Telugu respectively. Whether, like the *pot-ākāra* temple of Viṣṇu, these *devadroṇīs* also had anything to do with the shape of a boat is, however, a moot point today.

In the Kharod inscription dated 1182/83 A.D. of the Kalacuri ruler Ratnadeva III of Ratanpur,[11] eleven verses are devoted to the enumeration of the many holy structures provided by the minister Gaṅgādhara. It describes as *maṇḍapas* the structures dedicated to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Durgā and Ravi which were, in reality, temples. But while describing a building meant for housing ascetics and built with seasoned

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wood (*kaṭhora-kāṣṭha*) as a *maṭha*, the inscription alludes to the temple of Ekavīrā, built by Gaṅgādhara on top of a hill, as a *maṇḍapa* resembling the Puṣpaka, obviously because it had its own architectural form distinct from the other *maṇḍapas*:

Śrīmad-Ratnapure cāru pratīcyāṁ Puṣpak-opamaṁ|
akarod=Ekavīrāyā maṇḍapaṁ giri-mūrddhani||

N.P. Chakravarti, while editing the inscription in 1931–32, pointed out that the temple of Ekavīrā was then very much in existence on a hill to the west of Ratanpur.

Inscriptions sometimes also provide a reliable history of certain temples. For example, an inscription records that the Buddhist *vihāra* of Lokanātha at Hādigrāma in Kashmir was originally built of wood (*dāru-mayaṁ*) and after being burnt down by the king Siṁha, was rebuilt of burnt bricks in 1197 A.D.:[12]

Prāg-Gaṅgēśvara-sannidhau sumatimān
vaidyo=lhaṇadev-ābhidhaś-
cakrē dāru-mayaṁ vihāram-amalaṁ
śrī-Lokanāth-āspadaṁ|
tasmin-Siṁha-nṛipeṇa kāla-vaśato
dagdhe=tha pakv-eṣṭikā-
śreṣṭhaṁ tad-Ratakulladeva-tanayo=
muṁ Rāmadāso vyadhāt ||

The expression *Kāla-vaśataḥ* poses the possibility that the wooden structure had begun to totter with the passage of time, posing a threat to the visiting devotees and to the neighborhood and so was ordered to be burnt down.

Poetic writers of epigraphs, art critics in their own right, have tellingly though succinctly described temples, revealing the aesthetic feeling of the whole but not forgetting at the same time the different aspects which it comprises:

Suśliṣṭa-saṁdhiṁ ruciraṁ supādaṁ
śail-eṣṭakaṁ ca sthira-siṁhakarṇaṁ|
yadvat-Dhimādriś=śikharaiś=ca tadvat=
kṛtvā niketaṁ Vaṭa-vāsi-Bhānoḥ ||

Thus the eleventh-century composer[13] admirably engenders the total aesthetic impact of a lofty temple renovated from the ruins of an earlier structure.

Also when describing images, composers of epigraphs succeeded in blending iconographic and artistic comments. A graphic description of the image of Bhavānī by an eighth-century poet is an instance in point:[14]

Ten=āneka-vidhāna-dīkṣaṇa-śataiḥ
saṁsthāpit=ārtha-vyayaiḥ
Caṇḍī caṇḍa-narottamāṅga-racita-
vyālaṁbi-māl-otkaṭā|
sarppat-sarppa-vivēṣṭit-āṅga-paraśu-
vyāviddha-śuṣk-āmiṣā
līlā-nṛtta-rucir-vvilola-nayanā
mūrttir=Bhavānyāḥ śubhā||

Here, while mentioning image's attributes, each one of which was awe-inspiring, the poet effectively recaptured the blissful beauty (*śubhā mūrttiḥ*) of the image as a whole.

To an Orissan poet of the fourteenth century, the appearance of a Viṣṇu temple in Bhubaneshwar was no less graceful than the divine physique of Lord Keśava himself. He describes the temple,[15] playing a pun on the material and benign attributes of the Lord in such a way as simultaneously to be applicable to the temple itself:

Pādāc-chiro-vadhi jagat-kamanīya-rūpaṁ
mūrtta-stha-Keśavam=asau śubha-karmma-bhā
jam|
sac-cakra-saṅgatim=atiprasara-prāsādam
prāsādam=etam=asamaṁ svam=iva vyadhatta||

Similar is the description of a svayaṁbhu-*liṅga* by a Kannada poet, the composer of a twelfth-century Cāḷukya inscription:[16]

Kaḍeyada kaṁḍarisada ber-
paḍisada kammayisad=oṁd-akṛtrima-rūpaṁ
paḍedam svayaṁbhu neladiṁd=oḍed-udayaṁ-
geydam=alli Dakṣiṇa-Sōmaṁ||

The self-born (*Svayaṁbhu*) had risen from the earth, assuming a natural form (*akṛtrima-rūpaṁ*), without the turning of the lathe (*kaḍeyada*), without graving (*kaṁḍarisada*), without separation (*ber-paḍisada*) and without being touched by the craftsman (*kaṁmayisada*).

Finally, inscriptions make it clear that the practice of excavating and constructing wells, tanks and reservoirs of all descriptions, and periodically renovating them, was considered from early times an act no less pious than the installation of deities and the construction or renovation of temples. As a matter of fact, epigraphs which record the founding of new settlements give precedence to the construction of tanks over the founding of temples. To quote only one from the numerous instances available, a Kannada inscription of 1210 A.D. from Agrahāra Beḷagui

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in the Hassan District of Karnataka[17] alludes to the creation of an *agrahāra* in the following words:

> Keśavapuram-emba pesaroḷ agrahāravaṁ māḍi
> Keśava-samudra-Lakṣmī-samudrav-emba
> keṛegaḷaṁ kaṭṭisi mahottuṅgam-appa
> Īśa-Keśav-āyatanamam-idan-ettisi
>
> Having created an *agrahāra* by the name of Keśavapura, having constructed the tanks called Keśava-samudra and Lakṣmī-samudra and having erected the temples of Īśa and Keśava. . . .

Prakrit inscriptions contain many references to the excavation and construction of such water reservoirs as *kupi, kuë, vavi, vāvika, talāka* and *poḍhi*. And Sanskrit epigraphs provide such varied references to waterworks as *vāpī, kūpa, taḍāga, panīya-saṅgraha, udapāna, dīrghikā, kāsāra, saras, samudra* and *sāgara*. The epigraphical information available on this subject can be broadly classified under two heads:

1. Information of a technical nature, and
2. General descriptions of waterworks as projects of utility or as architectural monuments.

These inscriptions show that considerable engineering skill and study had gone into the construction of waterworks. For instance, the Rewāh inscription of Malayasiṁha (1193 A.D.)[18] speaks of the engineer who supervised the excavation of a tank as *saraḥ saṁsthāpane vidvān*, "an expert in the excavation and construction of tanks."

Ancient waterworks could be of considerable interest as architectural monuments, as shown by the well on the southern side of the Puṇḍarikākṣa-Perumāḷ temple at Tiruvellarai, near Tiruchirapalli in Tamilnadu. From the ninth-century inscription engraved on the stone slabs forming the margin of the well,[19] it is learnt that work on the *peruṅgiṇaṟu* or "big well" was commenced in the fourth and completed in the fifth year of Pallava Dantivarmā's reign. The editor of the inscription, K.V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, has noted many details of its architectural form and the groups of sculptures associated with it. This well had fallen into ruins and was repaired in 1262 A.D., in the reign of Hoysaḷa Rāmanāthadeva, disturbing then the stone slabs bearing Dantivarmā's inscription.

The now well-known Hisse-Borala inscription[20] of Vākāṭaka Devasēna, of *c.* 458–59 A.D., speaks of an isolated ancient reservoir. The slab bearing this inscription was found where there are remains of an ancient brick wall beside an old reservoir. Each brick measures 48×18×19 cm. This wall, locally called *pāḷu*, meaning, bank of a lake, is situated on an excellent catchment area with hills on three sides so that the waters could be stored. The inscription gives the name "Sudarśanasaras" to the reservoir thus constructed. The site, no doubt, deserves to be examined by specialists in historical architecture.

The earliest inscription providing some substantial technical information on hydro-engineering works is the famous one from Junāgaḍh (150 A.D.) of Rudradāmā,[21] which gives in detail the history of Sudarśanataḍāka. The text, only partially preserved, describes the *taḍāka* as a well-articulated structure (*suśliṣṭa-bandhaṁ*) with strong embankments, constructed in clay and stone without gaps in its breadth, length and height (*mṛttik-opala-vistār-āyām-occhraya-niḥsandhi-baddha-dṛḍha-sarvva-pāḷīkam*). The ancient engineers selected a site with a natural dam (*akṛtrima-setubandhā*) in which were provided conduits, drains, and also devices to keep away foul matter (*suprativihita-pranāḷī-parivāha-mīḍhavidhānaṁ*). That the *taḍāka*, badly ruined during excessive rains, was repaired in the second century A.D. despite the protests of the officers of the king, brings to light the earliest documented triumph of the Indian technocrats over an obscurant bureaucracy.

A fourteenth-century inscription,[22] incised on two slabs set up on the tank-bund in front of the ruined Bhairava temple at Porumāmiḷḷa, Cuddapah District, Andhra Pradesh, sheds light on tank-building activity in medieval south India. The tank, still in existence, is one of the largest in that region. The author of the inscription lists the twelve *sādhanas* or prerequisites for constructing a good reservoir in two verses. The twelve essentials are: (1) an enlightened king or, in effect, a willing financier; (2) an expert hydrologist; (3) ground of hard clay; (4) a feeder river; (5) hills around; (6) a dam of compact stone wall, not too long, but firm; (7) two extremes pointing away from below the tank; (8) an extensive and deep bed; (9) a quarry containing straight and long stones; (10) fertile soil in the neighborhood; (11) sluices with strong eddies; and (12) a gang of skilled workers. After stating that one thousand laborers worked at the tank and dam every day for two years and that a hundred carts were employed for the masonry work (*śilā-karma*) of the sluice (*bhramā*) and wall (*bhitti*), the author of the inscription proceeds to give the measurements of the tank in terms of *rekhā-daṇḍas*—

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5000 in length, eight each in height and width.

A much earlier Tamil inscription,[23] of the reign of Pāṇḍya Cendaṇ of the seventh century A.D., uses the expressions *madagu-paḍuttu* and *kāṯ-oḍuvittu* respectively for the construction of a sluice (*madagu*) and the excavation of a channel (*kāl*).

While such technical data are not always readily available in inscriptions there are not many descriptions of the overall architectural features of tanks and reservoirs. For example, there is the description[24] of an eleventh-century tank from Vasantagadh in Rajasthan:

Loka-prap=aiṣā sukṛtā ca vāpī
suśliṣṭa-sandhī ghaṭit-opalā ca|
sopāna-paṁktyā suśubhā subaddhā
niśreṇi-bhūt=ēva divaukasa-sya||

And an early seventeenth-century step-well in Madhya Pradesh is described[25] as follows:

Jīvā-sūnur-akārayan-nija-kule bhāsvat-
pratāp-ānvito
rathyā-saudha-śatāṁ gavākṣa-rucirāṁ
śast-ākṛtiṁ dīrghikām|
dūrād-āgata-śarmadāṁ dṛḍha-śilā-
baddhāṁ purāt-paścime
pūrṇāṁ śīta-jalena bhavya-racanā-
sopāna-paṁkty-anvitām||
khetā-sūnuḥ sūtradhāraś-cakāra
śast-ākāraṁ dīrghikāṁ Rāmadāsaḥ|
śilpaṁ tasyā vīkṣya śilpī manojñaṁ
kaścic-citten-ādadhāt śilpa-garvam||

In the above descriptions, too, as in the case of temples and images, the poets, while not ignoring such parts of the wells as the flight of steps, sculptures, auxiliary rest-pavilions with their windows, and even the fact that the wells were constructed of blocks of stone, have successfully captured the aesthetic image of the constructions.

NOTES

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2. N. Lakshminarayana Rao, ed. *A.R.I.E.* for 1950–51, App. B. No. 36, Delhi 1957. See also *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part 2, p. 14.
3. *Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency*, Vol. XIII, Part II, Bombay 1882, p. 420.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 372–73.
5. G.S. Gai, ed., *A.R.I.E.* for 1968–69, Delhi 1974, App. B. No. 320.
6. G.S. Gai, "Shiggaon Plates of Chālukya Vijayāditya, Śaka 630 "*E.I.*, Vol. XXXII (1957–58), pp. 317–24 and Plates.
7. G.S. Gai, ed., *South Indian Inscriptions Series*, Vol. XX, Bombay-Karnatak Inscriptions, Vol. IV, Mysore 1965, Nos. 3–7.
8. *Ibid.*, No. 3.
9. F. Kielhorn, "Udaypur inscription of Aparājita, Saṁvat 718," *E.I.*, Vol. IV (1896–97), p. 31, Text, verse 8.
10. R.R. Halder, "Ḍabōk Inscription of the time of Dhavalappadēva, Saṁvat 207," *E.I.*, Vol. XX (1929–30), pp. 123–25 and Plates.
11. N.P. Chakravarti, "Kharod Inscription of Ratnadēva III, Chēdi Saṁvat 933," *E.I.*, Vol. XXI (1931–32), pp. 159–65 and Plate.
12. Sten Konow, "Arigom Sarda Inscription, Laukika Saṁvat 73," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–08), p. 302, Text, verse 2.
13. F. Kielhorn, "Vasantgadh Inscription of Pūrṇapāla; The Vikrama Year 1099," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–08), p. 15, Text, verse 28.
14. P. Daya Ram Sahni, "Benares Inscription of Pantha," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–08), p. 61, Text, verse 4.
15. Lionel D. Barnett, "Bhubaneswar Inscription in the Royal Asiatic Society," *E.I.*, Vol. XIII (1915–16), p. 153, Text, verse 22.
16. Lionel D. Barnett, "The Inscriptions of Lakshmeshwar," *E.I.*, Vol. XVI (1921–22), p. 39, Text, verse 13.
17. B. Lewis Rice, ed., *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. V, Part I (1902), Cn. 244.
18. R.D. Banerji, "Rewah Inscription of Malayasiṁha, Year 944," *E.I.*, Vol. XIX (1927–28), p. 299, Text, line 23.
19. K.V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, "Tiruvellarai Inscription of Dantivarman," *E.I.*, Vol. XI (1911–12), pp. 154–58.
20. Shobhana Gokhale, "Hisse-Borala Inscription of Dēvasēna, Śaka 380," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVII

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(1967–68), pp. 1–4 and Plates.

21. F. Kielhorn, "Junagadh Rock Inscription of Rudradāman, The Year 72," *E.I.*, Vol. VIII (1905–06), pp. 36–49 and Plate.

22. V.S. Sukthankar, "The Porumamilla Tank Inscription of Bhāskara Bhavadura: Śaka 1291," *E.I.*, Vol. XIV (1917–18), pp. 97–109 and Plate.

23. K.G. Krishnan, "Madurai Inscription of Pāṇḍya Chendan, Year 50," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVIII (1970–71). pp. 27–32 and Plate.

24. F. Kielhorn, "Vasantgadh Inscription," Text, verse 29.

25. Sadhu Ram, "The Inscriptions from Rampura, Saṁvat 1664," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVI (1965–66), p. 129, Text, verses 42 and 44.

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13

Narrative Sculptures from Paunar: A Reappraisal

A.P. JAMKHEDKAR

SCULPTURES OF an early period are coming to light in fair number in the Vidarbha area of Maharashtra, where the Vākāṭakas ruled from the third to the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Recent finds of the Mansar Śiva-gaṇa in the vicinity of Ramtek and a group of early Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava images unearthed at Māṇḍhal (tahasil Umreḍ) both in Nagpur District.[1] may be cited as examples. One of the earliest groups of Vākāṭaka sculptures was retrieved by Acharya Vinoba Bhave while ground was leveled from his *ashram* on the left bank of river Dham in the village of Paunar in Wardha District. Among these, the bas-relief depicting five figures was very rightly identified by him as the meeting of Bharata and Rāma (*Bharatabheṭa*, Plate 116), and in 1949 a shrine was erected over it, since in this discovery of a religious panel he saw an auspicious beginning for his undertaking. The real importance of these images, however, was first realized by Mahamahopadhyaya V.V. Mirashi, who pointed out their significance in a paper read in the tenth session of the All India Oriental Conference and then in several articles both in English and Marathi.[2]

Due to ravages of time, the sculpture depicting *Bharata-milana* is fairly worn out, resulting in the loss of details, though the outlines of the figures, their attire and ornaments are still discernible. From the very composition and treatment of the figures, it is clear that the panel in question, as also other associated sculptures found on the site, were a product of the Vākāṭaka period. This is further corroborated by the find of a beautiful portrayal in stone of the river-goddess Gaṅgā standing in an elegant *ābhaṅga* posture on her *makara* mount (Plate 117). Sadly, Gaṅga's hands are mutilated. Her slender, suave and delicate figure with an oval face (Plate 118) somewhat reminds one of the Nāgārjunakondā female figure perched on *siṁhavyāla*.[3] The treatment of the garment, the *ekāvalī*, the torque, the *adharahāra*, the *hāra*, the *tāṭaṅka nūpuras* and other ornaments are typical of fifth-century figures from the Deccan and the South. Especially noteworthy is the *mekhalā-bhāra*, which consists of strings of jewels and pearls. It is, however on the basis of the label inscription "Gaṅgā Bhagavatī" (Plate 119) executed in box headed characters[4] that Mirashi came to the conclusion that these sculptures were a product of the Vākāṭaka period. Some more narrative panels of importance were also recovered along with the *Bharata-milana* sculpture and the Gaṅgā. These are:

(1) On a rectangular slab (Plate 120) is depicted the episode of Balarāma killing Dhenukāsura. On the background of a palm-tree and two friendly male witnesses is shown Balarāma in *pratyālīḍha* posture, his left arm resting on his thigh. His right hand grabs the hindlegs of Dhenukāsura. Balarāma is about to fling the demon on to the tāla tree. On the palm-tree proper is shown the donkey-demon leaning over one of the branches. A human is shown fallen against the foot of the tree, his right hand on the head and left

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arm resting on the thigh, as though in a swoon.

(2) The next piece (Plate 121), the most exquisite of all the narrative panels found here, illustrates *Kaṁsavadha*. It is remarkable not only for its lively composition but also for the unique depiction among the *Kṛṣṇāyana* scenes in Indian art as a whole. In the foreground of the panel, at the bottom, are seen the dead Kuvalayāpīḍa with his *mahout*, and Balarāma wrestling with Muṣṭika, the latter being overpowered by the former. Kṛṣṇa, stepping over the dead Cāṇūra, springs in *pratyālīḍhāsana* and grabs Kaṁsa by his hair, who, as the epic accounts narrate, was about to give orders to stop the music and arrest the two brothers. Kṛṣṇa despite resistance from Kaṁsa, is shown vigorously attacking Kaṁsa, with the other hand.

The above two panels were identified by Mirashi as Rāma killing Bāli and Rāvaṇa respectively. He was similarly prompted to identify other panels as "Rāma's Birth" (Plate 122), "Lament of Daśaratha" (Plate 123), "Rāma's Departure" (Plate 124),[5] and "Fight of Bāli and Sugrīva" (Plate 125). On the analogy of the Bharata panel, Mirashi seems to assume that the rest of the panels also depicted *Rāmāyaṇa* themes. He therefore further speculates the existence of a temple dedicated to Rāma at Pravarapura, the capital of the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena II (*c.* 420–450 A.D.), the royal headquarters being shifted to that city in the times of the latter king due probably to troubled times.[6] On the basis of the above supposition, Mirashi conjectures that Pravarasena II was the only person who could be the builder of this Rāma temple; and the construction of this temple was an act of piety on his part to please his mother, who was a devotee of Rāma. To sum up, the date of these sculptures, according to him, is the second quarter of the fifth century A.D..

The palaeographic peculiarities of the label inscription on the Gaṅgā sculpture do not lead much beyond the fact that the image of Gaṅgā and possibly the other sculptures associated with it were of the Vākāṭaka age. Short as the inscription is, the scope of an inquiry on its palaeography is necessarily limited. Whatever can be deduced from it is as follows:

(1) Both the arms of the character *ga* are equal, and the first turns inwards;

(2) the lower portion of *va* is not triangular but square;

(3) the letter *i* is shown with a loop turning to the left, and

(4) the letter *a* is indicated by attaching a loop turning tot he right on the top.

No significant deductions can be made excepting that *va* in the Vākāṭaka inscriptions is usually square, with the exception of the inscription of Rudrasena at Deoṭek (*c.* 330–350 A.D.), where it is triangular. The usefulness of this observation is indeed negligible, since within the box-headed style of characters, this peculiarity has been noticed in the Nachnā inscription of the controversial Vyāghradeva, and Nala Skandavarmā and Arthapati Kesarī's inscriptions, all of whom were contemporary of Pṛthvīsena II (*c.* 470–490), the last king of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, according to Mirashi.[7]

It was probably because of such restricted and inconclusive evidence which the short inscription could offer that Mirashi decided further to pinpoint the date of the sculpture on different premises. But the suppositions that Paunar and Pravarapura are identical, that the ancient temple on the left bank of Dham was dedicated to Rāma, or that it was constructed by Pravarasena II do not stand close scrutiny. The reconstructed Sanskrit form of Paunar should be Padmanagara (though the Prakrit Pomanayara, or Paümanayara) and not Pravaranagara/ Pravarapura. The proposition that the temple was dedicated to Rāma cannot be forwarded until it is conclusively established that Rāma was independently worshipped as a deity earlier than the tenth century A.D. and for considerations outlined below.

There is one more sculpture to be noticed. This is a large stele (2.15 × 1.59 m) of Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu with eight arms, found in the vicinity of the *ashram* and now housed in a nearby modern temple (Plate 126). In this panel the god is shown reclined on the coils of Śeṣa, the hoods canopying the head of the god. Brahmā is seated over the lotus emanating from the navel, and in the background are the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, about to attack the god. Lakṣhmī is shown massaging the foot of the god. The eight-armed Śeṣaśāyī holds three attributes: *cakra* in one of the right hands, and *gadā and śaṅkha* in two of his left hands. One of the left hands is in *abhayamudrā*, while the rest of the four arms are poised in a manner reflecting his relaxed mood. The upper part of the oblong slab is mutilated and repaired in cement by local craftsmen. The unmutilated portion has acquired an encrustation probably due to the application of oil. This piece is stylistically similar and belongs to the group of sculptures which were

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unearthed near the *ashram* and hence of the Vākātaka period.[8] Like the panel at Deogarh (measuring 1.50×1.17 m), this one probably formed part of a Viṣṇu temple.

In order to decide the date of these sculptures, it would not be out of place to discuss some of the associated features such as ornaments, which to some extent are clear in a couple of sculptures like the Gaṇgā and on figures in the *Kaṁsavadha* panel.

Of the ornaments, the *ekāvalī*, the *mukuṭa* and the simple jewel-studded waist-band of Kaṁsa compare well with the crown and *ekāvalī* of Padmapāṇi in Cave 1 at Ajanta, whereas the simple *hāra* worn by Kaṁsa's brother has a parallel in the one worn by the royal figure worshipping the Bodhisattva.[9] Similarly, the multi-jeweled bands and pearl-bands with loops of the *mekhalā* worn by the Gaṅgā have their parallels in several figures in the Ajanta murals.[10]

In the light of these considerations—epigraphic as well as stylistic—it would not be inappropriate to place these sculptures in a period not later than the second half of the fifth century A.D. In point of fact, from the treatment of the human body as revealed from the figures in the *Kaṁsavadha* panel and that of the Gaṅgā, one is inclined to place these sculptures even slightly earlier, perhaps sometime in the first half of the fifth century.

NOTES

1. *Indian Archaeology—A Review* (1972–73), Pl. XLII, B; *ibid.*, 1974–75. Pl. LVI.

2. In Marathi he wrote first in the *M.M. Prof. D.V. Potdar Commemoration Volume*, Pune 1950, and then in his book on the Vakatakas, *Vākāṭaka Nṛpati āṇi tyāncā Kāḷ*, Nagpur 1956. Though the sculptures, their significance and date have been discussed by him in his important work *Inscriptions of Vākāṭakas*, Vol. V of *C.I.I.*, he has written in more detail in his article "Pravarapura, An Ancient Capital of the Vakatakas," *Sarup-Bharati*, Hoshiarpur 1954, a felicitation volume in honor of Professor Lakshman Sarup (now included in professor Mirashi's Collected Works: *Studies in Indology*, Vol. II, Nagpur 1961, pp. 272–284).

3. Mulk Raj Anand, "Sculptures in Nagarjunakonda in Relation to Earlier and Later Conservation," *Marg*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (March 1965), p. 47, Fig. 4. Contrast of the Gaṅgā figure in question with other figures of Vākāṭaka period also can be noted. (For the Gaṅgā figures from Tigowā, *cf.* Mirashi, *Corpus*, Vol. V, Pls. F and G.)

4. For the estampage photo *cf.* Mirashi, *C.I.I.*, Pl. D. ii.

5. There are no cogent reasons given for identifying the panel as Daśaratha's Lament. The so-called "Rāma's Departure" can also be identified as "Kṛṣṇa's Departure from Vraja." Mirashi's identification of one panel as "Rāma's Birth" is also not satisfactory. In this identification, he has not been able to explain satisfactorily the object held in the hands of the woman on the right. The scene may be more properly identified as "Nanda Carrying Kṛṣṇa to Vraja."

6. Modern Paunar, where these sculptures are found, is usually equated with Pravarapura of the copper plates of the Vākāṭaka kings. The suggestion was first made by Rao Bahadur K.N. Dikshit. *Cf.* T.A. Wellsted, "Notes on the Vakatakas of the Central Provinces and Berar and Their Country, 4th to 8th Century A.D.," *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* (N.S.), Vol. XXIX (1933), pp. 159 ff. (*c.* third century A.D.). It was Mirashi who showed that the founder was more probably Pravarasena II (*c.* 420–450 A.D.) in whose times the capital of the Vākāṭakas was shifted from Nandivardhana to Pravarapura, some time after his 11th regnal year (*C.I.I.*, Vol. V, Pl. XXIV, pp. 23 ff). Ancient remains of habitation in a mound on the opposite bank, a little down the stream, of the Dhām are supposed to lend further support to this. The excavation carried out by S.B. Deo and M.K. Dhavalikar (1967) did reveal the existence of a township relatively more prosperous in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka period, but has failed in any way to support the equation Paunar=Pravarapura. *Cf.* Deo and Dhavalikar, *Paunar Excavation (1967)*, Nagpur 1968, pp. 2, 115. The reconstruction Pravaranagara-Pavaānaāra-Pavanāra is not only unsound but impossible if rules of phonetic change in Prakrit are taken into consideration.

7. In this connection it may be observed that Mirashi does not give any reasons why the sculptures

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cannot be of a date later than that Pravarasena II. Pṛthvisena II, his great grandson, was also a *paramabhāgavata*.

8. Mirashi has noticed this sculpture (No. 9, in his article, "Pravarapura, An Ancient Capital of the Vākāṭakas," p. 243), but probably because of the modern repairs was led to describe it as crude and therefore belonging to medieval period.

9. A. Ghosh, ed., *Ajanta Murals*, New Delhi 1967, Pls. xxiv and xxxii.

10. *Ibid.*, P. lxiv; also *cf.* the *mekhalā* of Māyā, cave 2, Pl. xiiv.

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14

Naṭarāja from Asanapat in the Orissa State Museum

D.C. SIRCAR

RECENTLY MY ATTENTION was drawn to the photograph and transcript of an inscription[1] "tentatively read" by Satyanarayana Rajaguru, then Epigraphist to the Government of Orissa, as well as to its tentative translation which, however, has not been attributed to Rajaguru, possibly through oversight. The inscription in thirteen lines, beautifully engraved under the figural representation of Śiva Naṭarāja on a stone slab discovered at Asanapat (Keonjhar District) Orissa (Plate 127) has been attributed to the third or fourth century A.D.—apparently by Rajaguru—though a clear statement in this regard has been avoided. The image, under which the inscription is engraved on the same stele, has thus been indirectly assigned to the third or fourth century A.D.

The eight-armed Śiva Vīṇādhara, engaged in the Tāṇḍava dance, is shown with an *ūrdhva-liṅga*. He wears *jaṭā-mukuṭa*. His attendant Bhṛṅgi is seated cross-legged with folded hands on the god's lower right side, while the other attendant, Nandī, is on his lower left side, probably dancing with his face lifted upwards in order to behold the god's face. Thus the bull's mouth reaches the fingers of the extended second left arm of the god, which is in the *patākā-hasta* pose. The god plays on the *vīṇā* with the forearms (i.e. the first or main pair), while with the back pair he holds the head and tail of a snake above his head. The god's second and third right arms wield respectively the rosary and the *damaru*, and his third left hand holds the *triśūla*. The positions of the god's legs, feet and knees accord with the dancing postures of Figures 41, 51, and 73 in the *Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇa*,[2] which illustrate 108 dance-postures after Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* depicted on a *gopūra* of the famous Naṭarāja temple at Chidambaram. The left foot of the dancing god in the image flatly touches the ground, but the right foot touches it by the toes. There is no Apasmārapuruṣa. C. Sivaramamurti assigns the image to the sixth century A.D.[3] This would then imply that he assigns the inscription to that date.

Regarding the images of dancing Śiva called Naṭṭeśvara or Narteśvara in Bengal inscriptions (also sometimes Naṭeśa or Nāṭyeśa) found in fairly large numbers in some areas of Bengal, N.K. Bhattasali says, "South India is particularly rich in the images of the dancing Śiva. In Northern India, these images are scarcely met with. . . . How Bengal, especially the present Dacca and the Tippera districts, came to share this peculiarity with Southern India is an interesting problem of history."[4] Although these dancing Śiva images of early medieval Bengal exhibit some local characteristics, I had occasion to suggest that their occurrence was one of the results of the migration of a considerable number of south Indians to Bengal during the age of the Pālas and the Sēnas.[5] The well-known Naṭarāja form of dancing Śiva developed in the south during the Cōḷa period,[6] but it has been rightly said: "The South Indian Nṛtyamūrtis of Śiva at first showed a well marked variety which, however, came to be merged in one outstanding type, the Śiva Naṭarāja. . ."[7]

Considering the great influence of south Indian

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culture in Orissa,[8] it has to be determined whether the Asanapat Naṭarāja has any similarity with the early south Indian images of dancing Śiva. According to Sivaramamurti, the Asanapat image is so developed in its iconography that there can be no doubt about the existence of an established early tradition.[9] The representation of the Nandī of this sculpture, probably dancing with *ūrdhvamukha*, may have later developed into the upward-gazing dancing bull of the Bengal sculptures.

On a careful examination of the palaeography of the Asanapat image inscription, I find that it cannot be much earlier than the sixth century A.D. Moreover, the published transcript and translation or interpretation of the epigraph contain some omissions besides errors; for example, it has not been noticed that there are two verses at the beginning of the record so that the entire document should not have been read as if written in prose.

Since the Asanapat inscription shows all the letters more or less clearly, the date of the inscription can be determined with the help of its palaeography, even if unlike other Orissan epigraphs the record employs the forms of the letter *l* and *h* found usually in East Indian inscriptions of the period from the fourth to the sixth century A.D.[10] However, from a glance at the writing, the Asanapat epigraph looks earlier than the dated Orissan records such as the Sumandala plates of 569 A.D.,[11] the Soro plate of 579 A.D.[12] and the Kanas Plate of 599 A.D.[13] Unfortunately, among the three grants, the one that is the earliest in point of date is palaeographically more mature than the other two. Thus the letter *y* retains its older tripartite form in the Soro and Kanas plates, but has developed the later bipartite form in the Sumandala plates. In the present inscription, *Y* in *Yā(ya)kṣē-śvara* in line 8 is bipartite; but in all other cases, its form is tripartite, the left limb exhibiting a curl on the left with an opening on the outer side. This peculiarity is noticed in the Soro plate among Orissan epigraphs and in other records such as the Gunaighar plate (507 A.D.),[14] Damodarpur plate (543/44 A.D.),[15] Faridpur and Mallasarul plates (later half of the 6th century A.D.),[16] the Dubi plates of Bhāskaravarmā (early years of the seventh century A.D.),[17] and the Bower manuscripts.[18] Likewise the form of *s* has a late look only in one case in line 3 (before *teja*). The long curved *i*-sign in *bhikṣu* (line 10), vijñāna (line 12), and *om=iti* (line 13), and the similarly long curved right arm on *ṇ* in *vyākaraṇa* (line 11) and *prakaraṇa* (line 12) in the present epigraph considered in conjunction with the above-noted facts appear to point to a date not before the earlier part of the sixth century A.D. This probably is supported by the occasional representation of the letter *b* by the sign for *v*. It is known that *b* was written with its own sign until the last quarter of the fifth century A.D. when it began to be written in eastern India sometimes by the *v* sign, and this indiscriminate use continued, in rare cases, until the early years of the seventh century A.D.,[19] when *b* came to be written by *v* only. The present inscription uses *b* in *brahmacāri* (line 9) and *bauddha* (line 12), but, *v* for *b* in *vṛhaspa* (line 7). This kind of indiscriminate use is also noticed in some other Orissan records such as the Sumandala (lines 12, 13, 17) and Soro (lines 5, 11, 16) plates, though the Kanas plate writes *b* by the sign for *v* in all cases.

NOTES

1. Anirudha Das, "Asanapat," *O.R.H.J.*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (1965), pp. 1–8.
2. B.V. Narayanaswami Naidu and P. Srinivasulu Naidu, eds., *Tāṇḍavalakṣaṇa*, Madras 1936.
3. C. Sivaramamurti, *Nataraja in Art, Thought and Literature*, New Delhi 1974, p. 177, Fig. 14.
4. N.K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca 1929, p. 110.
5. D.C. Sircar, *Social Life in Ancient India*, Calcutta 1971, pp. 115–16.
6. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, London 1927, p. 127.
7. J.N. Banerjea in R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, Bombay 1955, p. 305.
8. D.C. Sircar, "Indological Notes," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. VI (1972–73), p. 175.
9. *Ibid.*
10. J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, reprint ed., Varanasi (1963), pp. 1–17 and Plate, and the Damodarpur plate of 543/44 A.D., *E.I.*, Vol. XV, pp.

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Plate 116. Paunār. Meeting of Bharata and Rāma. Vākāṭaka (Main Branch) style. *c.* second half of the 5th century. A.D.

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Plate 117. Paunār. Gaṅgā, inscribed.

Plate 118. Paunār. Gaṅgā, profile.

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Plate 119. Paunār. Inscription on Gaṅgā.

Plate 120. Paunār. Dhenukāsura-vadha by Balarāma.

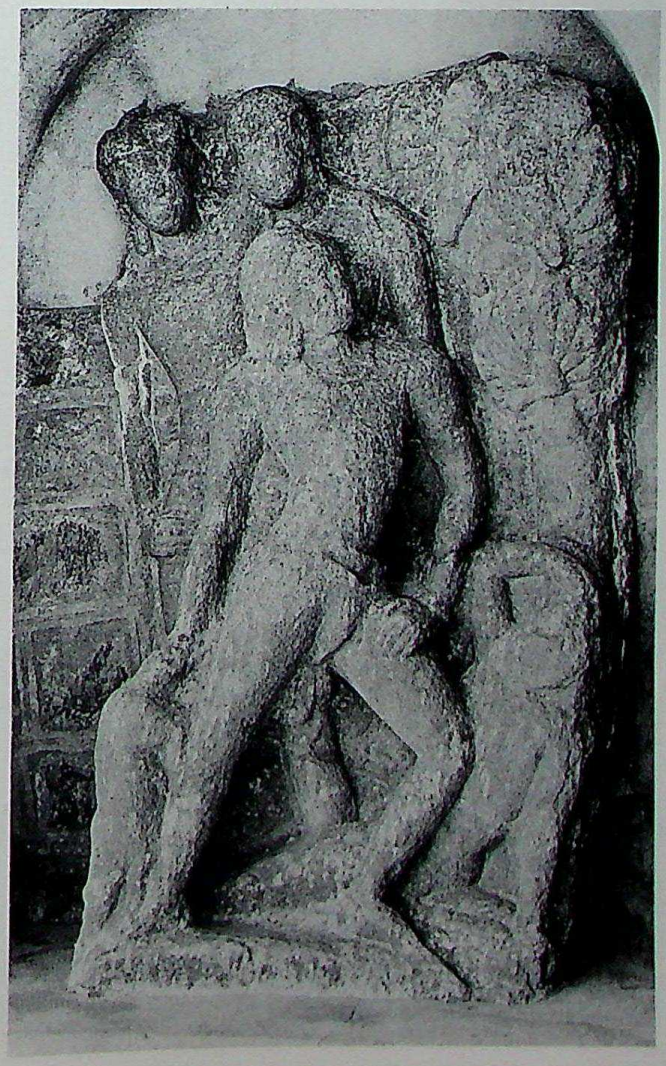

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Plate 121. Paunār. Kaṁsavadha.

Plate 122. Paunār. Rāma's birth.

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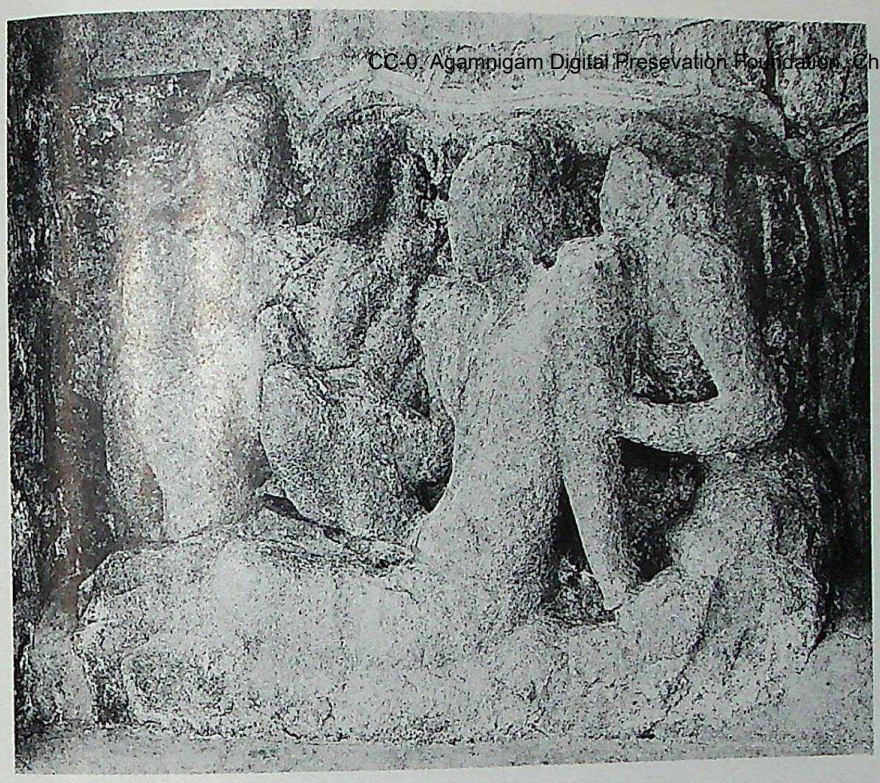

Plate 123. Paunār. Lament of Deśaratha.

Plate 124. Paunār. Rāma's departure.

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Plate 125. Paunār. Fight of Bali and Sugrīva.

Plate 126. Paunār. Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu.

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Plate 127. Asanapat. Naṭarāja. Early Kaliṅga style. Early 6th century. A.D. Orissa State Museum.

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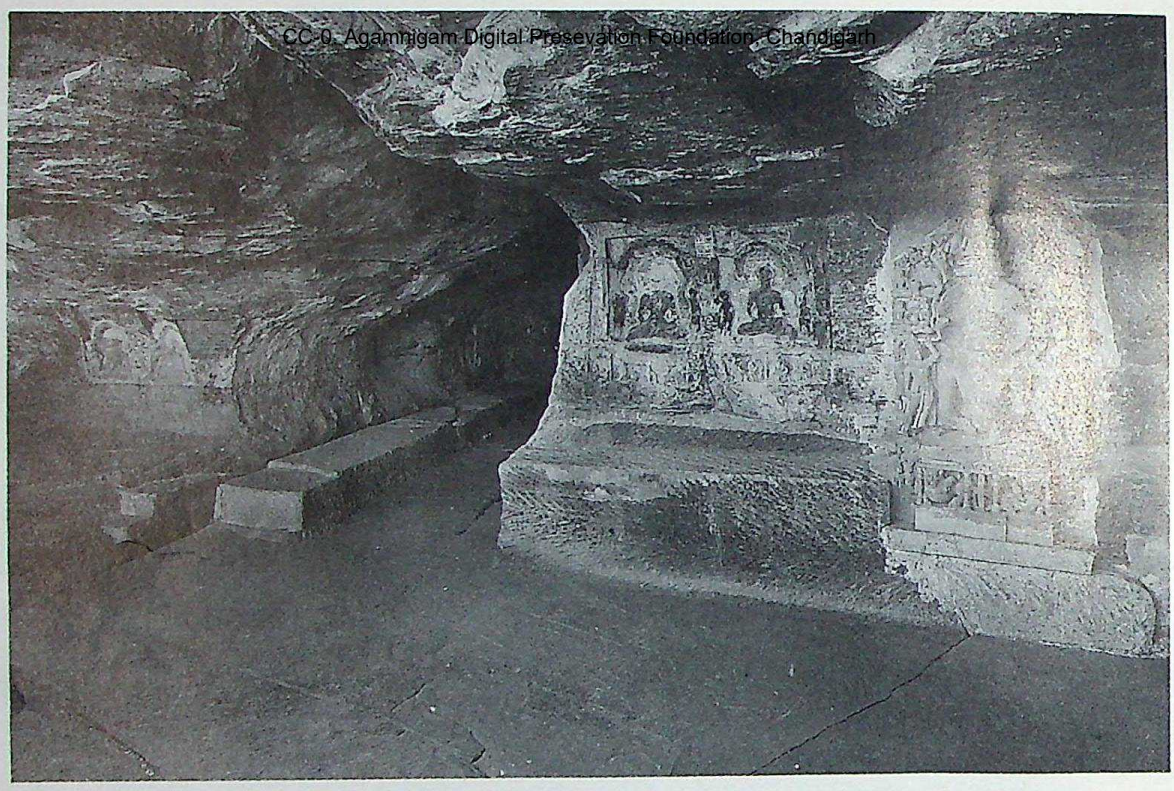

Plate 128. Udayagiri. Cave 20. View of verandah and entrance. Cave-mouth flanks two rock-cut reliefs. Early Gupta style. G.S. 106/A.D. 425. (Loose image of Pārśva right side datable to *c.* 10th-11th century. A D.)

Plate 129. Udayagiri. Cave 20. Two rock-cut Pārśvas and Gupta inscription on left side of the cave-entrance.

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Plate 130. Udayagiri. Cave 20. Two rock-cut Jinas on right side of cave-entrance with Pārśva in niche on the outside.

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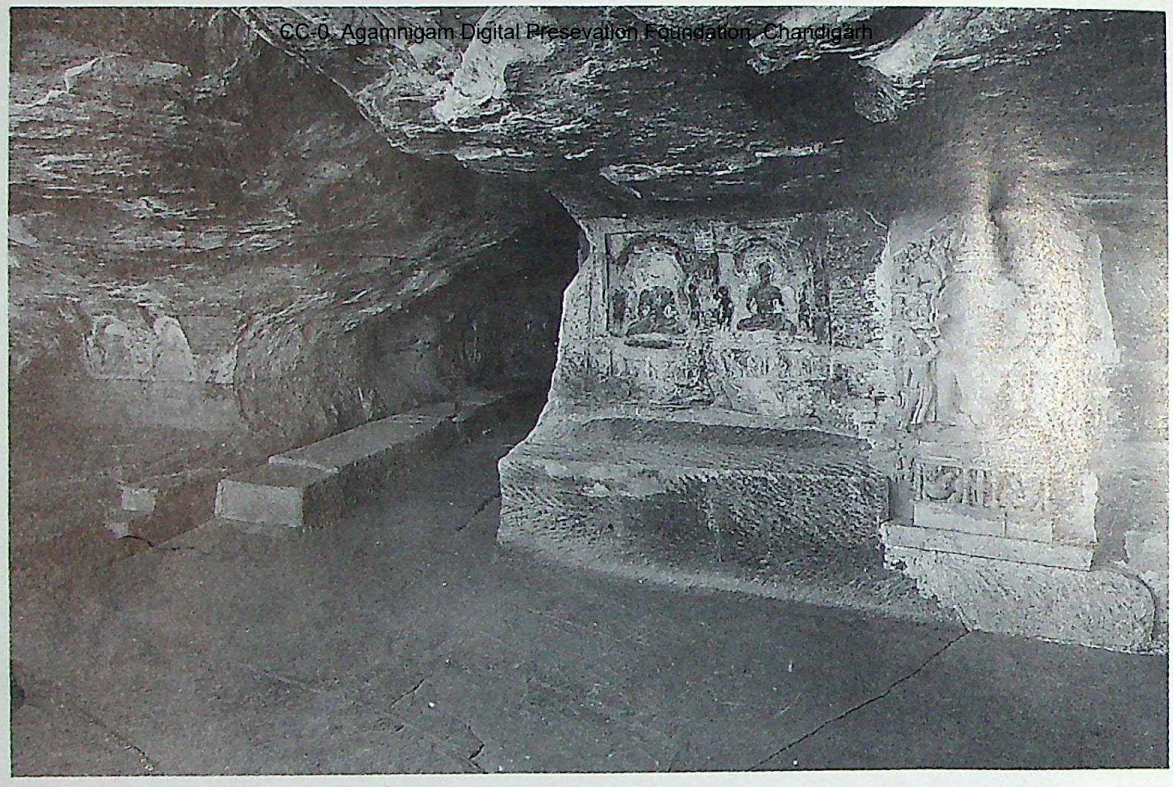

Plate 128. Udayagiri. Cave 20. View of verandah and entrance. Cave-mouth flanks two rock-cut reliefs. Early Gupta style. G.S. 106/A.D. 425. (Loose image of Pārśva right side datable to *c.* 10th-11th century. A.D.)

Plate 129. Udayagiri. Cave 20. Two rock-cut Pārśvas and Gupta inscription on left side of the cave-entrance.

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Plate 130. Udayagiri. Cave 20. Two rock-cut Jinas on right side of cave-entrance with Pārśva in niche on the outside.

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Plate 131. Kahaum. Inscribed pillar: Pārśva (standing) flanked by two worshippers at the base. Gupta style. G.S. 141/A.D. 460.

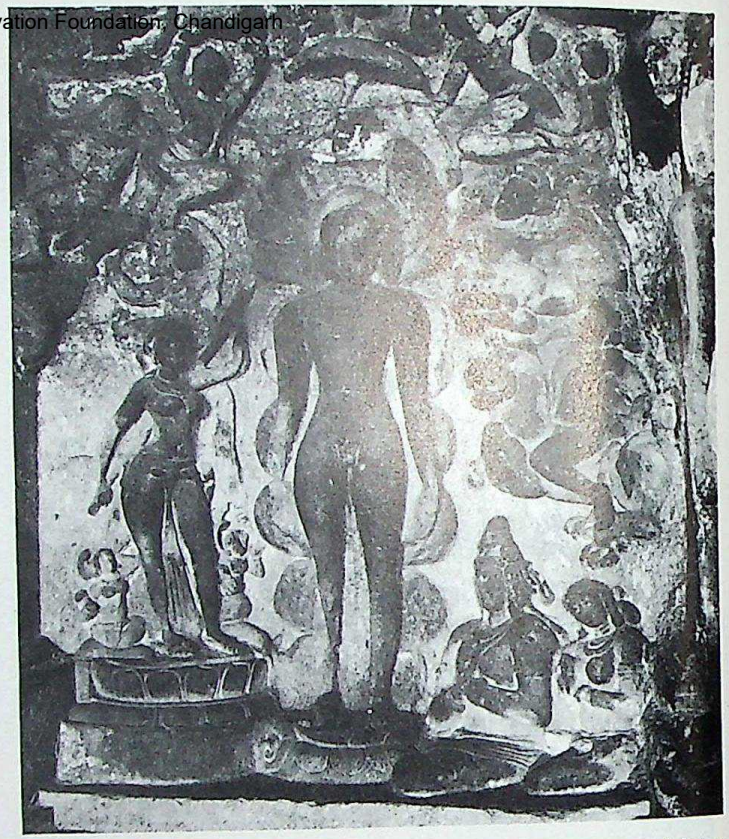

Plate 133. Ellora. Cave 32. Upper hall, Pārśva to the proper right of central shrine. Rāstrakūṭa. *c.* 9th century. A.D.

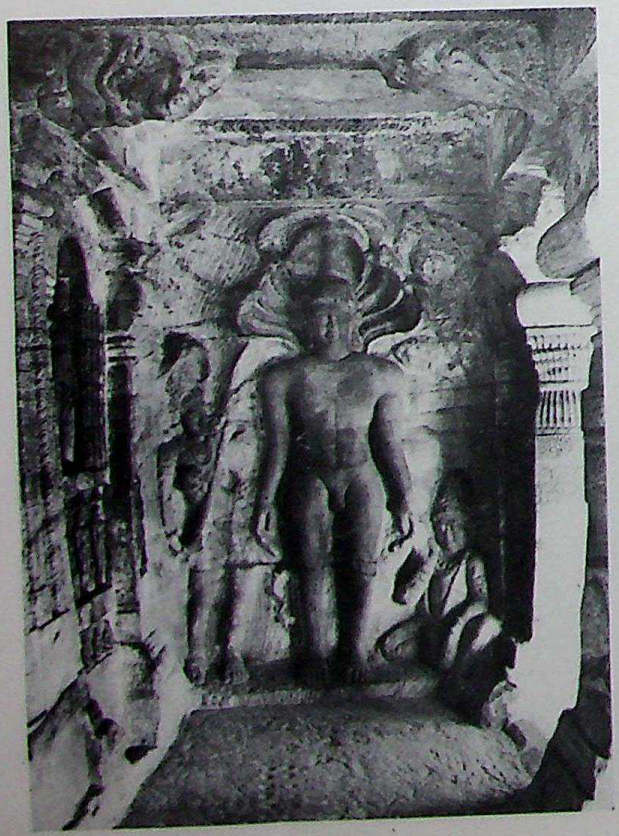

Plate 132. Bādāmi. Cave IV. Pārśva. Early Calukya. *c.* A.D. 600.

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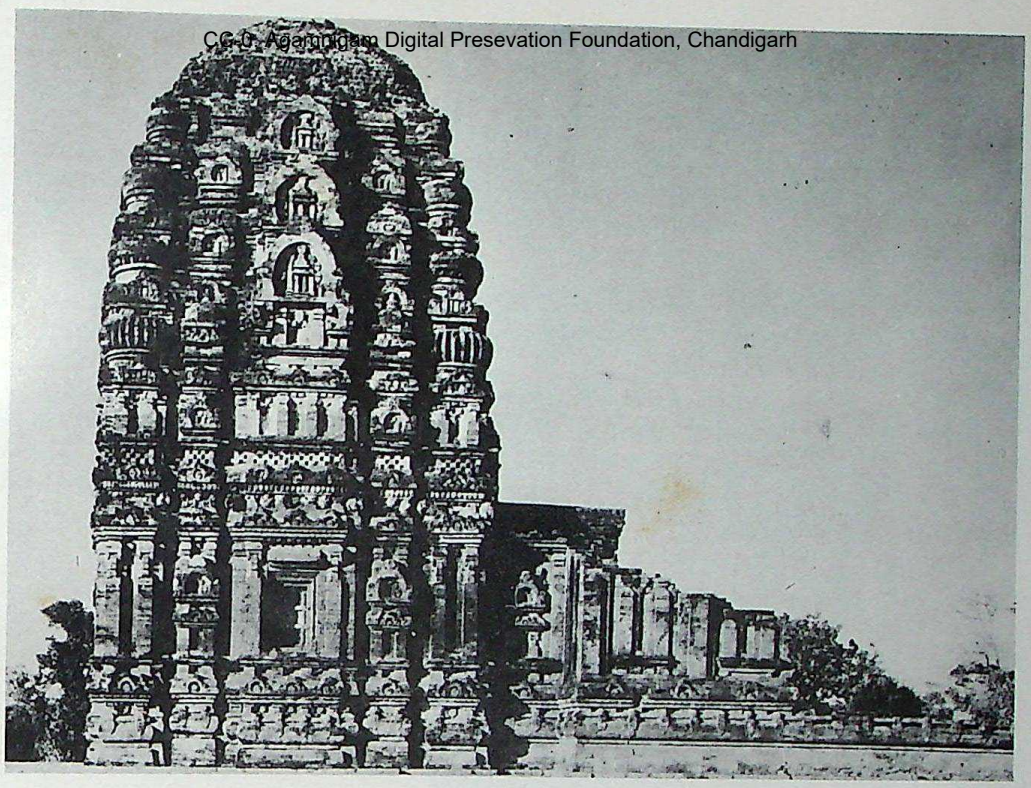

Plate 134. Sirpur. Lakṣmaṇa temple, general view from south. Dakṣiṇa-Kosala style, Pāṇḍuvamsī, founder Queen-mother Vāsaṭā. *c.* middle of the 8th century. A.D. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

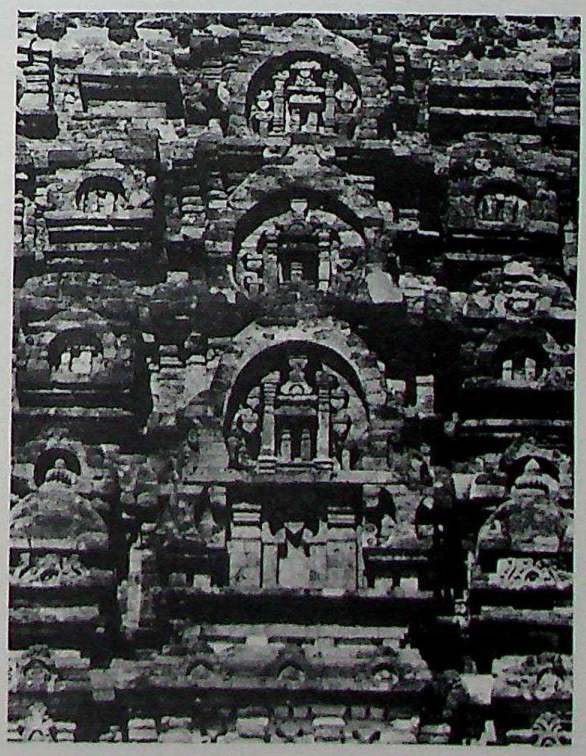

Plate 135. Sirpur. Lakṣmaṇa temple, detail of the *śikhara*. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

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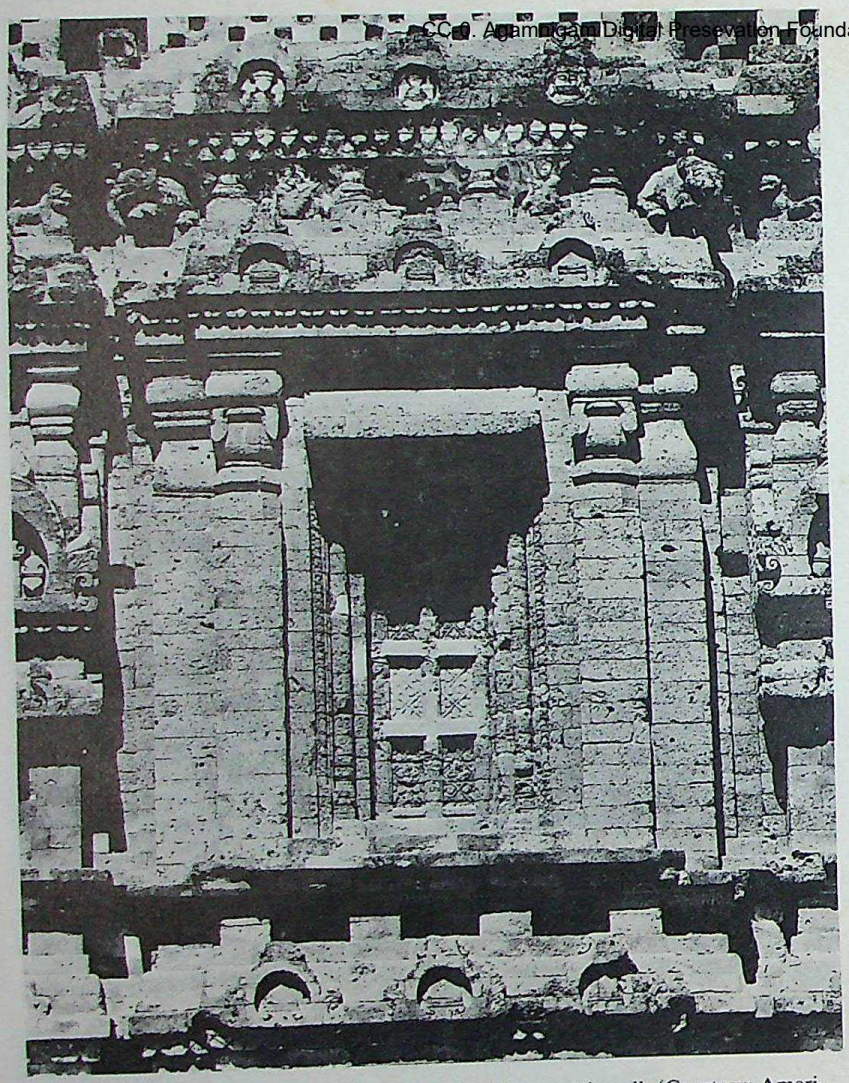
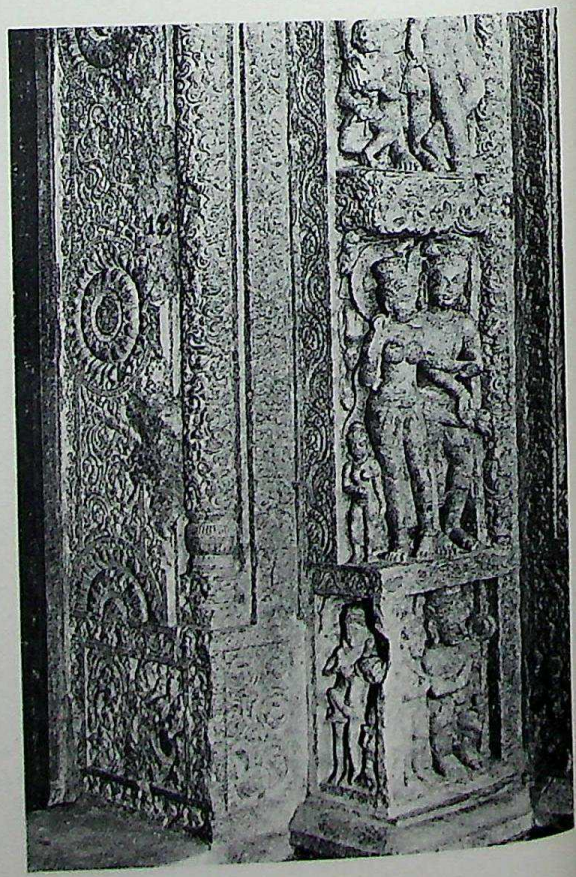


Plate 136. Sirpur. Lakṣmaṇa temple, detail of the *prāsāda* wall. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 137. Sirpur. Lakṣmaṇa temple, detail of the *garbhagrha*, doorframe. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)



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141ff. and Plate. For an earlier Mathurā inscription with the same peculiarity, *see* D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, Calcutta (1965), p. 518 (Bk. II, No. 42-A).

11. D.C. Sircar "Sumandala Plates of the Time of Prithivivigraha Bhattarak: Gupta year 250," *E.I.*, Vol. XXVIII (1949/50), pp. 79–85.

12. *E.I.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 197ff.

13. D.C. Sircar, "Two Plates from Kanas," *E.I.*, Vol. XXVIII (1949/50), pp. 329–334.

14. *I.H.Q.*, Vol. VI (1930), pp. 53ff.

15. *E.I.*, Vol. XV, pp. 141ff.

16. F.E. Pargiter. "Three Copper Plate Grants From East Bengal," *I.A.*, Vol. XXXIX (1910), pp. 195–216. Also *E.I.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 155ff.

17. D.C. Sircar, "Dubi Plates of Bhaskaravarman," *E.I.*, Vol. XXX (1953), pp. 287–304.

18. A.F. Rudolf Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscript*, Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. XXII, Calcutta 1893; and *E.I.* Vol. XXIII, p. 156.

19. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 334, text line 10; 336 text line 1; Sircar, "Dubi Plates," pp. 287–304.

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15

An Early Epigraphic Reference to Kalaśa

LALLANJI GOPAL

THE ADVANTAGE which ancient Indian inscriptions have over literary works as sources for cultural history need not be emphasized. Here the problems, such as of textual reading and interpolation, if at all encountered, are not especially baffling. Further, even where the date is not specifically mentioned in the epigraphical record, it can be fixed with reasonable certainty with the help of palaeography. And, although Sanskrit inscriptions also partake of the literary mannerisms characteristic of contemporaneous Sanskrit literary works, they often refer to some contemporary object or event and thus add contemporary color to their descriptions.

There are available some direct, though minor, epigraphical references to art and architectural objects and art activities which help to determine, in several cases, the precise nature of development and meaning of the technical terms. But I consider the casual references to art and architecture no less important. By reason of their being casual, the allusions have a case for inherent authenticity; they hardly can be suspected of being deliberately distorted or manipulated. The search for such references requires deep probing and a careful scanning. True, it may not yield a numerically impressive result, but, even the very few allusions will be gratifying in view of their significance.

Here, by way of illustration, I shall refer to verse 27 in the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśodharmā and Viṣṇuvardhana[1] dated when the year 589 of the Mālava era had expired, equivalent to 533/34 A.D. The object of the inscription is to record the construction of a large well by a person named Dakṣa in memory of his deceased uncle Abhayadatta. In the last but one verse of the inscription, a wish for the well to endure for long is expressed. The verse thus runs:

> Yāvat=tuṅgai=r=udanvān-kiraṇa-samudayaṁ saṅgakāntaṁ taraṅgai=r=āliṅgan=n=indu-biṁbaṁ gurubhi=r=iva bhujaiḥ saṁvidhatte suvṛttāṁ |
> Bibhrat-saudhānta-lekhā-valaya-parigatiṁ muṇḍamālā=miv=āyaṁ sat=kūpa=s=tāvad=āstām ='mṛta-sama-rasas vaccha-viṣyandit=āmbuḥ ||

Fleet translated the verse as follows:

> As long as the ocean, embracing with (its) lofty waves, as if with long arms, the orb of the moon, which has its full assemblage of rays (*and is more*) lovely (*than ever*) from contact (*with the waters*), maintains a friendship (*with it*),—so long let this excellent well endure, possessing a surrounding enclosure of lines at the edge of the masonry work, as if it were a garland worn round a shaven head, (*and*) discharging pure waters the flavour of which is equal to nectar.[2]

But Fleet failed to grasp the true meaning of the verse and the significant details of the water-drawing device associated with the well. It was M.C. Joshi who, long after Fleet, improved the translation at

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several places.[3] The primary concern here is the second half of the verse. Joshi has offered somewhat better meanings for the three expressions appearing in this part of the verse, *saudhānta-lekhā, valayaparigati* and *muṇḍamālā*. The translation of the second part of the verse, as proposed by Joshi, reads:

> . . . so long this fine well, having the elevational grace (charm of skyline) of a mansion, with a rotary motion (moving-ring) resembling a garland of skulls, would survive discharging nectar-like pure water.[4]

Joshi has succeeded in pointing out the reference to the water-lifting device associated with the well. But I do not agree with his interpretation of all the expressions figuring in the second part of the verse and the features of the well mentioned therein. I would paraphrase it as follows:

> Tāvat saudh=ānta-lekhā-valaya-parigatiṁ muṇḍamālāṁ iva bibhrat amṛta-sama-rasa-svaccha-viṣyandit=āmbuḥ ayaṁ sat-kūpaḥ āstām|

The translation proposed by Joshi refers to two features of the well, the elevational grace of a mansion and its rotary motion. But this militates against the form and construction of the expression in the third line of the verse. In the expression *saudhāntalekhāvalayaparigatiṁ*, one does not have two parts *saudhāntalekhā* and *valayaparigati* which are to be joined. Further, it will be wrong to place the emphasis on *saudhānta*. It is the second part of the expression (*valayaparigatiṁ*) which is the direct object of *bibhrat* (possessing, bearing or enjoying). Actually, in this part of the verse, there is reference only to one characteristic of the well, the wheel's revolving motion (*valayaparigati*). The preceding words in the compound expression (*saudhāntalekhā . . .*) provided further details about the source of the rotary motion, and the following expression (*muṇḍamālāmiva*) only offers a qualifying simile for clarifying the circular motion of the chain of pots borne by the wheel.

The verse, as interpreted by Joshi, refers to the superstructure of the well having the elevational grace of a mansion in the form of its skyline. Any structural parallel between the superstructure of the well and the elevation of a palace cannot be visualized. Joshi says that the superstructure of the well "comprising a frame, probably of wood consisting of two posts topped by a cross-bar with centrally suspended chain of pots akin to a *muṇḍamālā* stood an appropriate comparison with a mansion wherein the façade, during ancient times in India, was often bedecked with garlands of flowers or other decorative material."[5] This seems unlikely. Moreover, Joshi does not explain how the elevational grace (charm of the skyline) of a mansion can have a rotary motion. Thus the true meaning of the term *saudhāntalekhā* has been missed.

The term *saudha* is derived from *sudhā*, its primary meaning being whitewash, the extended meanings also covering plaster, mortar or cement. *Saudha,* hence, is taken to refer to a stuccoed mansion, a storied whitewashed house or a palace. The word *anta* can refer to the end, extreme or top of a building, depending on whether the extension is considered on the horizontal or vertical plane. The first alternative will require the significant part of the verse to be translated as "possessing the circle of the boundary line of a palace (in the form of a raised wall around the mouth of the well) resembling a garland of skulls." But this seems a grotesque simile with only the whiteness of the boundary-line of the palace to be compared with the whiteness of the skulls.

A happier sense follows if the word *anta* is taken to signify "top." In that case the relevant passage may be translated as " the wheel (*valaya*) possessing the rotary motion *(parigati*) of a series of pitchers (*saudhānta-lekhā*) resembling a garland of shaven or rather chopped heads (*muṇḍamālā*[7]). " The simile here gives a happier and fuller meaning. The pitchers resemble the chopped heads, and the chain of pitchers over the rotary wheel resembles the garland of chopped heads. In this translation one can retain an allusion to the most important feature of the well's water-drawing wheel,[8] its rotary motion, as the main emphasis of the passage as suggested by the construction and position of the terms.

Also, in this context, *saudhānta-lekhā* is taken to be a substitute for the word *kalasa. Kalaśa* means a pitcher, but the term also implies an architectural member, the orbicular pinnacle crowning the *caityas, devagṛhas* and *prāsādas*. Such a usage is indeed in conformity with the best traditions of literary mannerism in Sanskrit. Sanskrit poets are fond of employing terms which have different meanings for the two objects or situations of a simile. Bāṇa often uses such expressions, and his example has been emulated by subsequent writers. Moreover, Sanskrit writers at many places do not employ the proper or technical term directly. They much prefer to paraphrase it and

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then leave it to the reader to pick up the suggestion. This subtlety in style is often to be seen in a poetic composition, where the exigencies of meter impose restrictions on the use of specific words. A Sanskrit poet, with the rich fund of synonyms and the wide possibility of paraphrasing, makes capital use of the resulting literary style.

Thus, the verse in question has a literary way of alluding to *kalaśa* as a part of a building. From the comparison with the chopped heads (*muṇḍa*) some idea can be formed of the shape of *kalaśa*. This is one of the earliest usage of the term in a metaphorical guise, and its occurrence in a dated inscription lends it an added importance.

NOTES

1. J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, reprint ed., Varanasi 1963, pp. 150 ff.

2. *Ibid.*

3. M.C. Joshi, "An Early Inscriptional Reference to Persian Wheel," *Professor K.A. Nilakantha Sastri 80th Birthday Felicitation Volume*, Madras 1971, pp. 214–217.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

5. *Ibid.*

6. The *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra* of Bhojadeva of Dhārā,—the work datable to *c.* 1035–1055 A.D.—thus defines *saudha:* sudhā-lipta-talaṁm harmyàm saudhaṁ syāt ..... etc. 18.12.
(Cf. Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 25, ed. Vasudeva Saran Agrawal, Baroda 1966, p. 89.)

7. *Muṇḍa* means a chopped or shaven head. For "skull" the proper words in Sanskrit are *kapāla* and *karpara*. So, *muṇḍamālā* may best be rendered as a garland of chopped heads as in fact it is employed and implied in the works on Brahmanical iconography.

8. Later on, in the pre-medieval and medieval times, this device had been known as *araghaṭṭa*. For fuller details see L. Gopal, *Aspects of History of Agriculture in Ancient India*, Varanasi 1980, pp. 114–168.

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16

The Pārśva of the Inscription in Cave No. 20 at Udayagiri (M.P.)

GRITLI v. MITTERWALLNER

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CAVE AND ITS RELIEFS

CAVE 20 AT UDAYAGIRI (Madhya Pradesh) is situated in the northwestern end of the "Udayagiri hill."[1] The "main excavation" of this irregular cave consists of a tunnel-shaped passage running from east to west, measuring 50 feet in depth and 16 feet in breadth,[2] and a transversely placed well-lit verandah in front of it, running from south to north.

On the rear-wall of this verandah the visitor notices one inscription and four rock-cut figural reliefs. The inscription of eight lines in Sanskrit and in late Brāhmī-characters is engraved in a smoothed countersunk panel of trapezoidal outlines on the left side of the large entrance to the innermost cave under the natural overlapping roof of the verandah (Plate 128). It is dated in the Gupta year 106, i.e. 425 A.D.

Next to the inscription two reliefs of the twenty-third Jina, Pārśva, had been carved into the living rock (Plate 129). On the other or right side of the entrance to the cave two more sculptural reliefs of Jinas may be observed: The one near the entrance represents an unidentified Jina, the second next to it represents the third rock-cut Pārśva in this cave (Plate 130).

Besides there are today in the cave two loose cult images: One is an unidentified seated Jina who is placed against the rear-wall of the innermost cave at the side of a deep niche, containing a slab with foot-prints; the other loose cult image by the side of the third rock-cut Pārśva (Plate 128) represents once again Pārśva. Both loose cult images date to medieval time.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PĀRŚVA MENTIONED IN THE INSCRIPTION

It was A. Cunningham who first published the inscription in Cave 20 at Udayagiri in 1880 with a translation by "Rāja Ṣivaprasād." Cunningham named it the "Jaina Cave", "... because the inscription inside declares it to have been dedicated to Pārṣwanāth" [*sic!*]. According to him the image of Pārśva "was placed at the mouth of the cave."[3]

Two years later, in 1882, E. Hultzsch re-edited the inscription in Cave 20, adding his revised reading and his translation.[4] He, however, did not refer to the figure (*ākṛti*) of Pārśva, mentioned in the inscription.

J.F. Fleet was the next epigrapher and Indologist who again reëdited the inscription under reference in his monumental work on the *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors* ..., adding his own transcription and translation, as well as a facsimile of the inscription.[5] Fleet, like Cunningham, was of the opinion that the "...image of Tīrthaṁkara Pārśva" had been installed " at the mouth of the cave."[6] In his footnote 9 on page 259 he clarified his remark on page

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258 by adding: "The image referred to in this inscription is not now in the cave."[7] That he imagined the figure of Pārśva to be a "loose image" may be concluded also from an insertion in his translation. For he inserted after "caused to be made" (*acīkarat*) in brackets: "...[and set up]."[8] Apparently he did not think of a rock-cut relief of Pārśva, for which—contrary to a loose cult image—there was no need of installation.

M.B. Garde, who, as Director of Archaeology of the former Gwalior State, carried out most important research work, excavations and preservations of the monuments in this State,[9] was the first scholar to realize that the inscription refers to a rock-cut relief of the Pārśva "rather than (as held by Fleet) to some other loose image which has disappeared now." He apparently identified the relief of Pārśva on the right side of the entrance to the cave with the object referred to in the inscription by remarking: "The inscription on the cave speaks of the installation of an image of Parsvanatha at the mouth of the cave. The inscription flanks the mouth of the cave on one side and on the *other* are two rock-cut images of Jaina *Tirthamkaras* one of which is that of Parsva ..."[10] He also rightly observed that the "word *achikarat* occurring in the inscription" refers to "...the making or chiselling" of an image (in rock) rather than to the 'installation' of a loose image."[11]

D.R. Patil, who published a short guide on the caves of Udayagiri, for the first time noticed "the two left-hand side sculptures... at the left side of the entrance" to the cave, near the inscription. He also correctly observed that "... these are Jain sculptures belonging to the period indicated by the inscription (i.e., to 426 A.D.)." Yet, like Cunningham and Fleet he believed that the image of Pārśva, mentioned in the inscription, is no longer in the cave. For he added: "The inscription, however, refers to the making of an image of Pārśvanātha which is not now found in the cave."[12] On pages 48 and 49 he emphasizes this point by writing: "The image described in the inscription refers to a loose image (i.e., not cut out of rock) which has disappeared now."[13]

We agree with M.B. Garde that the Pārśva referred to in the inscription had not been installed as a loose image at the mouth of the cave. On stylistic grounds of the earliest rock-cut relief in this cave and on account of the use of *acīkarat* (caused to be made) in the inscription, the Jina rather should be identified with one of the rock-cut reliefs at the entrance of the cave. However, I believe that it is not the rock-cut Pārśva on the right side of the entrance to the cave, as Garde surmised, but the rock-cut Pārśva immediately next to the inscribed panel on the left side of the entrance to the cave (Plate 129, Figure 1).

In the countersunk niche next to the inscription, the figure of a seated Pārśva had been carved. The sides of the niche taper strikingly towards the top. The niche measures 50 cm in height, 33 cm in width below and 23.5 cm above. By the side of this Pārśva a second seated Pārśva had been accommodated in a second niche. The latter measures 54 cm in height, 35.5 cm in width below and 27.5 cm above, i.e. it is somewhat larger than the former, but its sides still taper considerably towards the top. Both niches are separated by a broad raised bridge decorated with a vase, rosettes and a flying figure which faces the Pārśva in the second niche.

The following observations indicate that these two badly mutilated reliefs of seated Jinas with their hands in the *dhyāna-mudrā* represent the 23rd Jina Pārśva.

First, their heads are surrounded not only by haloes but in addition by snake-hoods of seven heads which, despite mutilation, still project well beyond the discs of the haloes (Plate 129, Figures 1 and 2).

Second, both Pārśvas are seated on the coils of the body of the Nāga who is supposed to protect them. Below the crossed legs of Pārśva next to the inscription, three large and bulging coils of the body of the protecting Nāga are seen protruding (Plate 129, Figure 1). Those below the Pārśva in the niche on the outside are too badly worn out to be checked in their correct numbers (Plate 129, Figure 2).

Third, the two small attendants accompanying the two Pārśvas are characterized by single snake-hoods over their heads (Figures 1 and 2). The shape of these single snake-hoods varies in both niches. They are preserved in their complete outline over the heads of the attendants, flanking the Pārśva next to the inscription, because they had been carved flatly on the background of this niche. The top portions of the single snake-hoods of the attendants accompanying the Pārśva in the second or outer niche, however, had been carved in a boldly projecting manner, away from the background of the niche. This is why they could be chopped off from over the heads of the attendants, leaving broad platforms on their heads.

In both niches the Pārśva is attended by female Nāgīs who hold the handle of a flywhisk (*cāmara*) in

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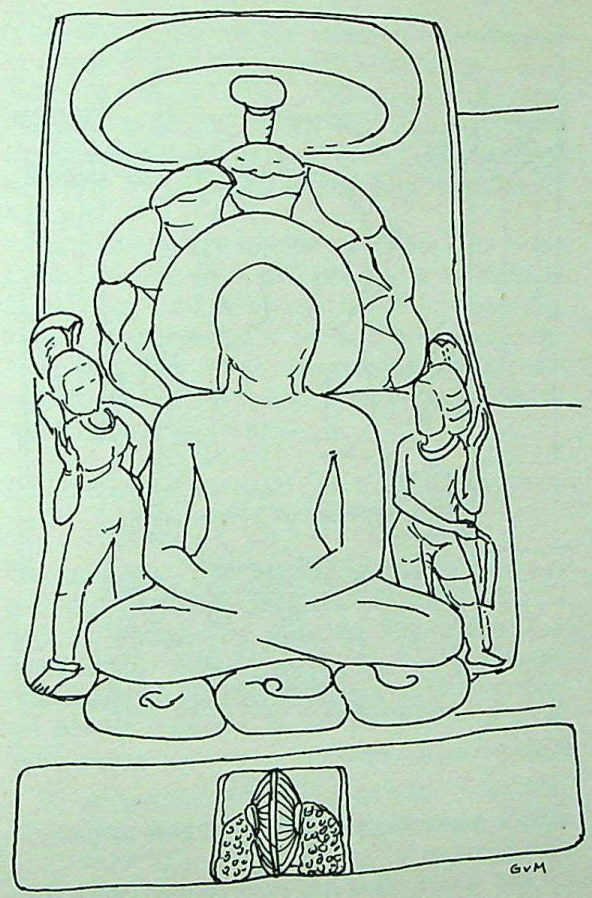

Figure 1. Udayagiri. Jaina cave, rock-cut Pārśva on left side of cave-entrance, next to the inscription.

their raised right hands, the flywhisk itself being almost invisible due to its small dimensions. They are carved on the proper right side of the two Pārśvas whereas the male Nāgas of slightly less height than the Nāgīs are seen on the proper left side of the Pārśvas. They likewise carry a flywhisk in their right hands but across their bodies. The left arm of each Nāgī rests over the hips while the Nāgas raise their left hands with their palms facing the Pārśva, the object of their attendance.

It is important to note that the pair of attendants flanking the Pārśva next to the inscribed panel still appear partly concealed behind the legs of the Jina, which results in a close framing of the Pārśva, whereas the attendants of the Pārśva in the outer niche have been removed further away from him, touching the latter at his knees only. From this minor alteration in the composition it may be concluded that

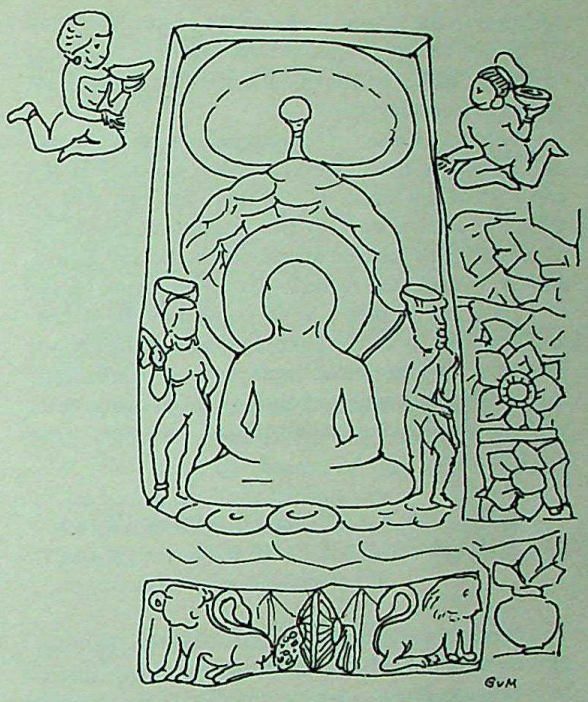

Figure 2. Udayagiri. Jaina cave, rock-cut Pārśva in second niche, on left side of cave-entrance.

the artist of the second relief realized the need of a clearer composition by detaching the attendants from the Jina.

Both the Pārśvas are shaded by a parasol, the stick and underside of which appear over the seven-headed snake-hood of the protecting Nāga. The parasol, halo and snake-hoods of the Pārśva next to the inscription are conceived in a slightly smaller size than the ones over the Pārśva in the outer niche (Plate 129).

Both the Pārśvas are provided with socles cut horizontally into the rock-wall just below the seated Jinas, apparently in imitation of the socles of pedestals of loose cult images. The countersunk surface of the socle below the Pārśva next to the inscription is shaped in the outlines of a low rectangular layer, plain on either side, and provided merely in the center with the wheel of law (*dharma-cakra*). The latter is represented standing with its rim towards the viewer in an oblong compartment sunk below the level of the socle. Thick garlands of pearls are attached to its hubs.

The socle-formation below the Pārśva in the second niche, however, had been enriched by two lions in the side-portions which now decorate the socle in

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addition to the *dharma-cakra* in the center. The head of the lion on the proper left side seems to be carved in profile, while the one of the lion on the proper right side is in frontal position.

Another element of enrichment regarding the second Pārśva is the flying basket-holders outside the top-part of his niche. Hence there are two reasons why the Pārśva next to the inscription should be identified with the one mentioned in the inscription. Firstly, because the record refers to *one* figure (*ākṛti*) of Pārśva only which had been given by the donor, and secondly, because the composition of the Pārśva, carved in the outer niche displays several elements of further development and enrichment in comparison with the simpler composition of the Pārśva next to the inscription.

THIRD ROCK-CUT RELIEF OF PĀRŚVA ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE CAVE

The third rock-cut mutilated Pārśva on the right side of the entrance to the cave, which M.B. Garde identified with the Pārśva of the inscription,[14] may be excluded as the *ākṛti* of the inscription, because it was made at a yet later time than the second Pārśva on the left side of the cave-entrance. Several details corroborate a later dating of the third Pārśva:

It is taller and slimmer than the two other Pārśvas.

Its niche is now carved in rectangular outlines and higher than the niches of the two other Pārśvas. (It measures 55 cm in height and 42 cm in width on top.)

The halo behind its head no longer is carved flatly like the ones behind the heads of the Pārśvas on the left side of the cave-entrance, but it is rimmed with a raised edge (Plate 130, Figure 3).

The number of the coils of the protecting Nāga below the crossed legs of the third Pārśva seems to have increased to six instead of the three coils seen below the legs of the Pārśva next to the inscription.

In addition to these coils, two lateral coils of the Ṇāgạ now appear behind the upper body of the Pārśva, projecting well beyond his arms on either side.[15]

The two attendants flanking the Pārśva, a taller female on his proper right side and a slightly smaller male on his proper left, no longer are represented as touching the Jina at his legs but are placed at a good distance from him. Whether they still wear single snake-hoods behind their heads cannot be made out

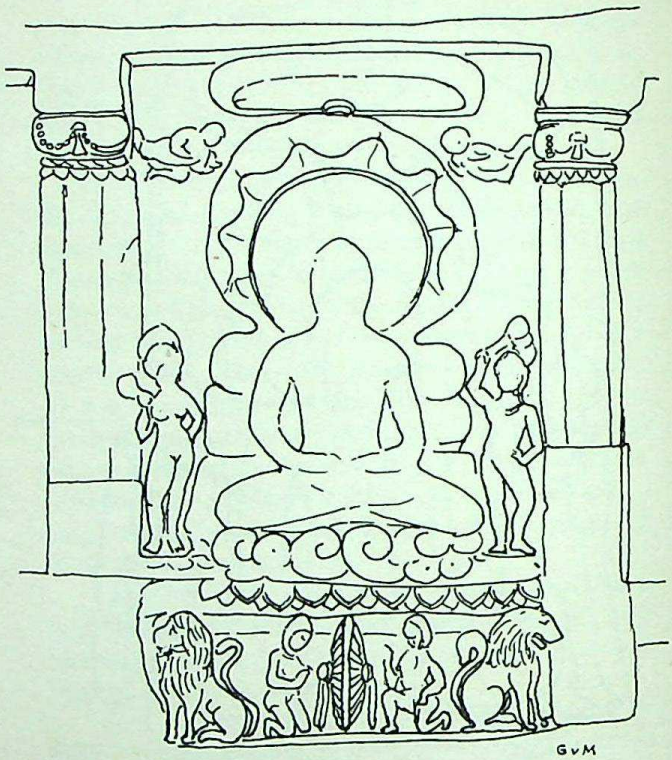

Figure 3. Udayagiri Jaina cave, rock-cut Pārśva on right side of cave-entrance

with certainty. They, however, still hold flywhisks in their right hands.

The composition has been further enriched in comparison with the one of the second Pārśva on the left side of the cave-entrance. In addition to the parasol, the motif of small flying garland-bearers (*mālādhara*) has been introduced which are lacking in the background of the niche of the second Pārśva, there being no space for them on account of the trapezoidal contours of the niche.

A layer of lotus-petals between the socle and the coils of the Ṇāgạ, likewise represents a new element of enrichment, as also the two kneeling adorants worshipping the wheel of law (*dharma-cakra*) in the center of the socle.

Another feature which substantiates the younger age of this third rock-cut Pārśva, is the architectural framing of the niche by a pair of pilasters. Their shafts are square at the base, octagonal on top and carry *kumbhas* as capitals with lotus petals decorating their feet. The bellied parts of the *kumbhas* are adorned with garlands of pearls issuing from small lotuses. The same decoration may be seen in the capitals of the

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four pillars supporting the ceiling of the *garbhagṛha* of Cave 19 at Udayagiri dated to about the second half of the fifth century A.D., because, for instance, the two river-goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā already appear in the lower corners of the entrance to this sanctuary which originally had been dedicated to Viṣṇu.[16]

In sum one may say that the Pārśva next to the inscription represents the earliest rock-cut figure in this cave, created in the year 106 of the Gupta Era (=425 A.D.), recorded in the inscription, while the other two reliefs of Pārśva represent more elaborate and enriched versions of the same theme, carved at slightly later stages of time.

RELEVANT PASSAGE ON PĀRŚVA IN THE INSCRIPTION OF CAVE 20

The inscription itself interestingly enough had not been damaged like the three rock-cut reliefs of Pārśva and the rock-cut relief of an unidentified Jina immediately on the right side of the entrance to the cave. I quote from J.F. Fleet's transcription the relevant passage regarding the donated figure (*ākṛti*) of Pārśva:

3. guhā-mukhē sphaṭa-vikaṭ-ōtkaṭām=imāṁ jita-dviṣō Jina-vara-Pārśva-samjnikāṁ Jin-ākṛtiṁ śama-damavān=a-
4. cīkarat (//) .....[17]

This important passage was rendered by E. Hultzsch in the following way: "[... a man possessed of self-command and tranquility of soul] caused this far-visible and large-proportioned Jina-statue called 'Pārśva, the Chief of the Jinas, the conqueror of his foes,' to be erected at the mouth of the cave."[18]

Fleet already remarked that Hultzsch "... wrongly read *sphuṭa* instead of *sphaṭa* and thus missed the meaning of this passage."[19] Fleet himself translated *utkaṭa* in the compound *sphaṭa-vikaṭ-ōtkaṭām* in the third line of the inscription as an adjectival phrase: "... richly endowed with (the embellishments of) ...." The word *vikaṭā* he rendered as "an attendant female divinity." Hence he translated the corresponding passage thus:

> He, who has conquered the enemies (of religion), (and) is possessed of tranquility and self-command, caused to be made (and set up) in the mouth of (this) cave, this image of a Jina, richly endowed with (the embellishments of) the expanded hoods of a snake and an attendant female divinity, (and) having the name of Pārśva, the best of the Jinas.[20]

M.B. Garde interpreted "the qualifying phrase": *sphaṭa-vikaṭā-tkaṭām* as: "mighty and fierce on account of the hoods of a snake" and he remarked regarding Fleet's "*vikaṭā*": "Of course, the hoods of the snake are present in the rock sculpture referred to above, but the female attendant is not."[21]

I suggest the following rendering of the passage under review:

> [He, who is endowed with self-command (and) mental calmness,] caused to be made at the mouth of (this) cave, this figure of a Jina, called Pārśva, the best of the Jinas, the conqueror of his enemies, which has huge (and) gigantic expanded snake-hoods (i.e. which has snake-hoods that are made or expanded apart and upwards).

As my literal translation reveals, I presume that the two adjectives *vikaṭa* and *utkaṭa* of the compound *sphaṭa-vikaṭ-otkaṭām*, obviously a wrongly constructed *bahuvrīhi*, represent Prakrit forms of the Sanskrit forms *vikṛta* and *utkṛta* of the verb *kṛ*. I am of this opinion even though in the Prakrit languages the past participle of *kṛ* often occurs as *kata*, devoid of a cerebralized *ṭ*,[22] or as *kaḍa*[23] and as *kaya*.[24] There are, however, instances which substantiate that the past participle of *kṛ* sometimes was rendered in Prakrit dialects with a cerebralized *ṭ* as *kaṭa*.[25] This may be the reason why M. Monier-Williams derived *kaṭa* in *vi-kaṭa, pra-kaṭa* and *saṁ-kaṭa* from *kṛta*, the Sanskrit past participle of *kṛ*, regarding them as probable Prakrit-forms.[26]

Even though the original meaning of the two concerned adjectives *vikaṭa* and *utkaṭa* indeed is problematic,[27] it seems to me the only possible interpretation, yielding sense, in view of the expanded snake-hoods behind the halo and head of the depicted Pārśva in Cave 20 at Udayagiri next to the inscription. Apparently the composer of this inscription on purpose applied two similarly sounding adjectives with a similar meaning to describe the expanded snake-hoods in their large size, by hinting at their horizontal (*vi-kaṭa*) and vertical (*ut-kaṭa*) expansion.

Whoever had the opportunity of seeing the rock-cut Pārśva next to the inscription, as well as the second and third rock-carved Pārśva in the same cave, cannot be but convinced that the two adjectives in

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question refer to the expanded snake-hoods of the protecting Nāga of Pārśva.

NĀGĪ WITH ONE SNAKE-HOOD ON PROPER RIGHT OF THE PĀRŚVA NEXT TO THE INSCRIPTION

As mentioned above, Fleet held the word *vikaṭā* to represent "an attendant female divinity". To back his view he quoted the Sanskrit Dictionary of Monier-Williams, which explained *vikaṭā* as "a kind of female divinity, peculiar to Buddhists."[28] Since Fleet, however, thought that "the image referred to in this inscription, is not in the cave," he mentioned for support of his theory the rock-cut relief of Pārśva in Cave IV at Bādāmi in which a female Nāgī with a single snake-hood behind her head on the proper right side of the Jina holds up a parasol over the latter (Plate 132).

This remark of Fleet resulted in the comment of B.C. Bhattacharya that ..."The Gupta period showed a marked development in the iconographic characteristics of a Jina figure. Not only do we see in such images the particular *Lāñchanas* incorporated but miniature figures of a Yakṣa and Śāsana devatā invariably included.[1]" In his footnote 1 on the same page he repeated the observation of Fleet regarding the "attendant female divinity" in Cave 20 at Udayagiri and the sculptural example in Cave IV at Bādāmi.[29]

As seen above, the rock-cut Pārśva in Cave 20 at Udayagiri, to whom the inscription refers, indeed is accompanied by a pair of Nāga-attendants. The pair of Nāgas inevitably raises the question whether it may be regarded as an early form of the pair named Padmāvatī and Dharaṇa or Dharaṇendra, which one finds described in the later medieval texts, for instance in: Bhāvadevasūri's *Pārśvanātha-caritra,*[30] in the *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣa-caritra*[31] and in Pārśvapaṇḍita's *Parśvanātha-purāṇam;*[32] in other words, whether the idea of Padmāvatī and Dharaṇa as attending genii (or "Yakṣī" and "Yakṣa") of the Jina Pārśva had been developed already in the year 106 (=425 A.D.), in sculptural representations.

To answer this question it is necessary in a short survey to view the corresponding important representations which have a bearing on this problem.

1. The lower part of one of the earliest cult images of Pārśva dating to Kuṣāṇa time, is preserved in the State Museum in Lucknow as No. J 13. N.P. Joshi recognized that the remnants of this image of a standing Jina represented Pārśva, for when he turned it, he discovered incised lines at the rear of his legs marking the coils of the protecting Nāga.[33] This broken image is important, as it proves that Pārśva in Kuṣāṇa time had no female person on his proper right side, like the Pārśva of Gupta time of the year 106 (=425 A.D.), but on his proper left side. On this side, the tiny feet and anklets of a female figure have been preserved. On the other side, a male person had been carved with a strip of cloth hanging over his left arm. N.P. Joshi identified such acolytes as monks of the "ardha-phalaka sect."[34]

2. The standing Pārśva of Kahaum is dated to Gupta Era 141 (=460 A.D.) by an inscription.[35] He is worshipped by a kneeling man on his proper right side and a female on his proper left side (Plate 131). They are not characterized by snake-hoods behind their heads.

3. In the verandah of Cave IV at Bādāmi, the standing Pārśva is accompanied by a Nāgī who has a single snake-hood behind her head and who holds the rod of a parasol over Pārśva.[36] On the proper left side of Pārśva a male person, devoid of a snake-hood, is represented in a kneeling posture.[37] In the uppermost corner of the relief on the same side the demon Meghamālī attacks Pārśva, who, according to the legends of the life of Pārśva,[38] attempted to kill him (Plate 132).

4. In the verandah of the Jaina Cave at Aihole, a similar scene had been carved, depicting Pārśva between a parasol-holding Nāgī, who is here accompanied by a second Nāgī and a kneeling male person, while the demon Meghamālī attacks Pārśva from above.

Both rock-cut reliefs at Bādāmi and at Aihole, dating from about the seventh century A.D., obviously form the initial stage of illustrations of an episode in the life of Pārśva in which he is attacked by Meghamālī.

5. The same episode or event in his life, the attack of Meghamālī, is fully developed in several Jaina caves at Ellora dating from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. It is only in these caves that Pārśva is shown surrounded by many hovering demons attacking him from both sides. One of the rock-cut reliefs of this theme in Cave 32 at Ellora (Plate 133) reminds of sculptured and painted representations of the attack of Māra and his consorts on the Buddha under the Bodhi tree prior to his enlightenment, and it seems as

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if the Buddhist representations, which date from earlier time, influenced the reliefs and sculptures produced by the Jainas later on. The same event has been represented also on loose slabs of stone, one of which is preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.[39]

The rock-cut relief in Cave 32 at Ellora, illustrated here, proves to be of significance for this short survey, firstly because Pārśva has a halo behind his head, in addition to the expanded snake-hoods, as in the rock-cut reliefs of Udayagiri of Gupta time, and secondly, because the female person holding a parasol over him no longer is characterized by a snake-hood behind her head, although two small Nāgīs are shown accompanying her (Plate 133). From this detail it is concluded that the artist did not regard her as Padmāvatī, the Yakṣī or Śāsana-devī of Pārśva, who in the above quoted medieval texts usually is described with four hands and four attributes in them,[40] and who is shown with a many-headed snake-hood behind her head when accompanying the Jina Pārśva[41] or when worshipped as an independent deity.[42]

In view of the above discussed sculptural representations, I presume that neither the Nāgī serving as parasol-holding attendants, like the ones in the caves at Bādāmi and Aihole, nor the Nāgīs serving as flywhisk-holding attendants, like the ones in the two rock-cut reliefs of Pārśva in Cave 20 at Udayagiri, represent Padmāvatī. These Nāgīs with one single snake-hood behind their heads rather should be regarded as flywhisk holding attendants of Nāga origin, who along with their male partners served the Pārśva.

Flywhisk-holding attendants of non-Nāga origin, accompanying the Jinas[43] have been depicted frequently in cult images of the school of Mathura in Gupta time.[44] They also appear in some stone images of the Pārśva from south India of earlier medieval time. In one of the latter, such as in an image of Pārśva preserved in the British Museum, their character as Yakṣas has been emphasized, as they carry fruits in one of their hands, while the other holds a flywhisk. Moreover in the last-named image, a pair of Nāgas with three-headed snake-hoods behind the heads and two hands, is seated in the lower corners: the male Nāga on the proper right side of Pārśva, the female Nāgī on his proper left.[45] It is concluded from this cult image that in earlier medieval time, a pair of flywhisk-holding Yakṣa-attendants had been carved independently in addition to a Yakṣa-pair of Nāga origin, both accompanying the Pārśva.

As regards the pair of Nāga-origin flanking the Pārśva in Cave 20 at Udayagiri, they seem to represent an initial stage in the evolution of flanking Yakṣa-pairs, still combining the features of flywhisk-holding attendants with the features of Nāga-pairs.

PALAEOGRAPHIC CHARACTER OF THE INSCRIPTION IN CAVE 20 AT UDAYAGIRI

Concerning the palaeography of the inscription in Cave 20 at Udayagiri, it strikes one that its letters do not conform to the local variety, represented for instance by the inscription of the year 82 (=401 A.D.), incised on the façade of Cave 6 at Udayagiri, which belongs to the late Brāhmī script of the so-called "southern class" and was patronized by a local king of the Sanakānika tribe.[46] The letters of the inscription in Cave 20 rather adhere to a different class, in vogue in the northern and northwestern parts of India, from where also the donor of this inscription and the rock-cut Pārśva had come.[47]

There is yet another inscription at Udayagiri, incised in the rear wall of the *garbhagṛha* of Cave 7, which likewise does not conform to the local variety. It belongs to the writing style found in the northeastern parts of India with loops in the letters of *s, m* and *n*. The donor of this record had come from Pāṭaliputra, as the inscription reveals.[48]

Consequently there exist at Udayagiri two donative inscriptions which are due to newcomers to this place: one in Cave 20, the donor of which hailed from the north and one in Cave 7, the donor of which hailed from the northeast. This in itself does not seem surprising, because Udayagiri apparently was a well-known center of pilgrimage (*tīrtha*) which attracted visitors from far distant parts of the former Gupta empire. But one thing, indeed, is remarkable: that the two donors had their donative records incised *not* in the local writing style but in the one of their home-regions. Does this imply that the two donors brought their own engravers along with them from their home-provinces or did the stone masons of Udayagiri copy the inscriptions from drafts prepared by writers skilled in the northern class of Brāhmī script?

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NOTES

1. For a site-plan of the caves at Udayagiri, *cf.* D.R. Patil, *The Monuments of the Udayagiri Hill*, Gwalior 1948, Pl. II.

2. A. Cunningham, *Tours in Bundelkhand and Malwa in 1874-75 and 1876-77*, in: *A.S.I.*, Vol. X, reprint ed., Varanasi 1966, p. 53.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.

4. E. Hultzsch, "Two Inscriptions from General Cunningham's Archaeological Reports," *I.A.*, Vol. XI (1882), pp. 309–310.

5. J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, reprint ed., Varanasi 1963, pp. 258–260, Pl. XXXVIII A.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 259, fn. 9.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

9. K. Bruhn, *The Jina-Images of Deogarh*, Leiden 1969, p. 6.

10. M.B. Garde, *Annual Report of the Archaeology Department, Gwalior State for Samvat 1980, Year 1923-24*, Gwalior n.d., pp. 10–11. (The italics of the word *other* are mine.)

11. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

12. Patil, *Monuments of Udayagiri*, p. 41.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49.

14. Garde, *Annual Report*, pp. 10–11.

15. Coils, projecting in horizontal or lateral direction from behind the body of Pārśva already may be observed in cult images of this Jina, created in later Kuṣāṇa time. (Cf. Pl. XLIII, b in J. Jain and E. Fischer, *Jaina Iconography, Part I*, Leiden 1978.) In these, the coils below the crossed legs of Pārśva, serving as a sort of cushion, are, however, yet absent. The latter seem to be characteristic feature of Pārśva images of the Gupta time.

16. *Cf.* second volume of a series of five volumes on the chronology of Gupta art which is under preparation.

17. Fleet, p. 259.

18. Hultzsch, "Two Inscriptions", p. 310. The brackets are ours.

19. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 259, fn. 9.—According to M. Mayrhofer the words *sphaṭaḥ* (m.) and *sphaṭā* (f.) etymologically have no significance, as they seem to be hypersanskritisms (and adaptions of *sphāṭati*) and may not be derived from *sphaṭ*. (*A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary*, Vol. II: D-M, Heidelberg 1963, pp. 389–390.)

It is interesting to note that the composer of this inscription used the rare word *sphaṭa* instead of *phaṇa* for snake-hood, which is often found in epic and classical literature. On the basis of this inscription at Udayagiri in Cave 20, *sphaṭa* lexically is somewhat better substantiated than hitherto in dictionaries, in which it is marked with "L". (*Cf.*: M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford 1899, p. 1269.)

20. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 259. The brackets before "He, . . ." and after "self-command" are mine.

21. Garde, *Annual Report*, p. 11. According to O. von Hinober, *vi-* and *ut-kaṭa* are attested in early literature. Hence they should not be equated with *vi-* and *ut-kaṭa* of the latter Prakrit. Whether they have anything to do with the root *kṛ* is very doubtful on account of their attested meaning. Thus *vikṛ* clearly means "verändern, verunstalten" (=alter, disfigure); merely the sense of *utkṛ*, which occurs less frequently, is not as clear. Consequently Garde correctly translated the words under discussion as "mighty" and "fierce". (From a personal letter to the author.)

22. R. Pischel, *Comparative Grammar of the Prākṛit Languages*, second edition, Delhi 1965, pp. 52, 161.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

24. *Ibid. cf.* also H. Jacobi, *Ausgewählte Erzählungen in Māhārāshṭrī*, Darmstadt 1967, p. XXI.

25. S.M. Katre, "Prakrit Languages and Their Contribution to Indian Culture," in: *Building Centenary and Silver Jubilee Series*: 17, Deccan College, Poona 1964, p. 44. (Unfortunately Katre does not quote any passages from texts as examples.)

26. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, pp. 953, 652, 1125. For *ut-kaṭa* and *pra-kaṭa* he cited Pāṇini, according to whom both words derive from *ud* and *pra* with the affix *kaṭa* (Pāṇ. V, 2, 29). T.W. Rhys Davids, *Pali-English Dictionary*, London 1921–25, derived *vikaṭa*, meaning *changed, altered, distorted; disgusting, foul, filthy* in Pali (cf. p. 611), from: *vi*+kata, of *kṛ*.

S. Paranavitana, *Inscriptions of Ceylon, Vol. I, Containing Cave Inscriptions From 3rd Century B.C. to 1st Century A.D. and Other Inscriptions in the Early Brāhmī Script*, Colombo 1970, explained *kaṭa* (in inscription No. 251) on page 20 from Skt. *kṛta* under

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rule LVIII (cf. pp. XXIX, 104).

27. This is the reason why O. Bohtlingk and R. Roth did without an explanation of *kaṭa* regarding *utkaṭa, prakaṭa* and *saṁkaṭa*. They merely remarked: "Die ursprüngliche Bedeutung von *kaṭa* in diesen Wörtern ist schwer anzugeben." (*cf.*: *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch, herausgegeben von der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, zweiter Teil: ka-ccha,* reprint ed., Osnabrück 1966, col. 20.)

28. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, p. 259, fn. 9.

29. B.C. Bhattacharya, *Jaina Iconography*, reprint ed., Delhi 1974, p. 30, fn 1.

30. M. Bloomfield, *The Life and Stories of the Jaina Savior Parsvanatha*, Baltimore 1919, p. 19.

31. J. Jain and E. Fischer, *Jaina Iconography*, Part II, Leiden 1978, p. 21; Part 1, pp. 17–18; *Triṣaṣṭi salākāpuruṣacaritra,* Book IX, Chap. 2, vv. 247–310, by Hemachandra, translated by H. Johnson Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. 139, Vol. V, Baroda 1962, pp. 394–397.

32. S. Settar, "The Classical Kannada Literature and the Digambara Jaina Iconography," in *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, edited by U.P. Shah and M.A. Dhaky, Ahmedabad 1975, p. 39, fn. 75, p. 46.

33. From a verbal communication by N.P. Joshi to the author in December 1979.

34. N.P. Joshi, "Jaina Icons from Mathurā in the Kuṣāṇa Period," cyclostyled paper, read during Seminar on Cultural History of Ancient Mathurā in New Delhi, January 1980, pp. 10–13.

35. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, pp. 65–68.

36. According to S. Settar, "Classical Kannada Literature," p. 39, ft. nt. 79, p. 46, the Kannaḍa poet Pārśvapaṇḍita in his *Pārśvanāthapurāṇam*, a work of the early 13th century, gave "an elaborate picture of how Dharanendra ... spread his enormous hood over the meditating Pārśva, and how his consort Padmāvatī held an umbrella to protect her husband in turn."

37. Jain and Fischer, *Jaina Iconography*, p. 21, identified this male worshipper as Dharaṇendra who "appears twice in the panel, once near the feet of Pārśvanātha ... and a second time in the form of a snake with a large crown of five or seven hoods ...." (protecting the Pārśva).

38. J. Charpentier, "Die legende des heiligen Pārśva, des 23. Tirthakara der Jainas, aus Devendra's tīkā zu Uttarādhyayana XXIII," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 69 (1915), p. 356; J. Pereira, *Monolithic Jinas*, Delhi 1977, pp. 44–46.

39. A.K. Bhattacharyya, *Indian Museum, Calcutta*, Tokyo 1970, Pl. 62.

40. *Cf.* footnotes 31 and 32: *cf.* also Bhattacharya, *Jaina Iconography*, pp. 104–105.

41. H.V. Glasenapp, *Der Jainismus*, Reprint ed., Hildesheim 1964, pl. 27, No 23. (From drawings of Yakṣas and Yakṣīs of the 24 Jinas of the Digambaras, published by J. Burgess, "Digambara Jaina Iconography," *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. 32 (1903), pp. 459 ff.

42. Settar, "Classical Kannada Literature," Fig. 19.

43. According to K. Bruhn "camara-bearers" have "no theological characters at all" as against the "Yakṣa and-Yakṣī" pairs "in the case of the Jina" who "show a clear theological connection with the main figure." ("Further Observations on the Iconography of Pārśvanātha," *Mahāvīra and His Teachings*, Ahmedabad 1978, p. 382.)

44. *Cf.* Fig. 26 in U.P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art,* Banaras 1955; and plates 43 and 45, in N.P. Joshi, "Mathura, the Available Material," in: *Jaina Art and Architecture*, Vol. I, New Delhi 1974.

45. *Jaina Art and Architecture,* Vol. III, New Delhi 1975, Pl. 319 A.

46. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, pp. 21–25.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 258–260.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–36. In the second volume on the chronology of the art under the Guptas, which is in preparation, the palaeography of the inscriptions in Caves 6, 7 and 20 at Udayagiri is dealt with as also its comparative examples in the northwest and northeast of India. I wish to thank here the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for granting a travel-aid to visit and photograph among other sites the caves at Udayagiri. Thanks are also due to the Archaeological Survey of India for permission to take photographs at the site.

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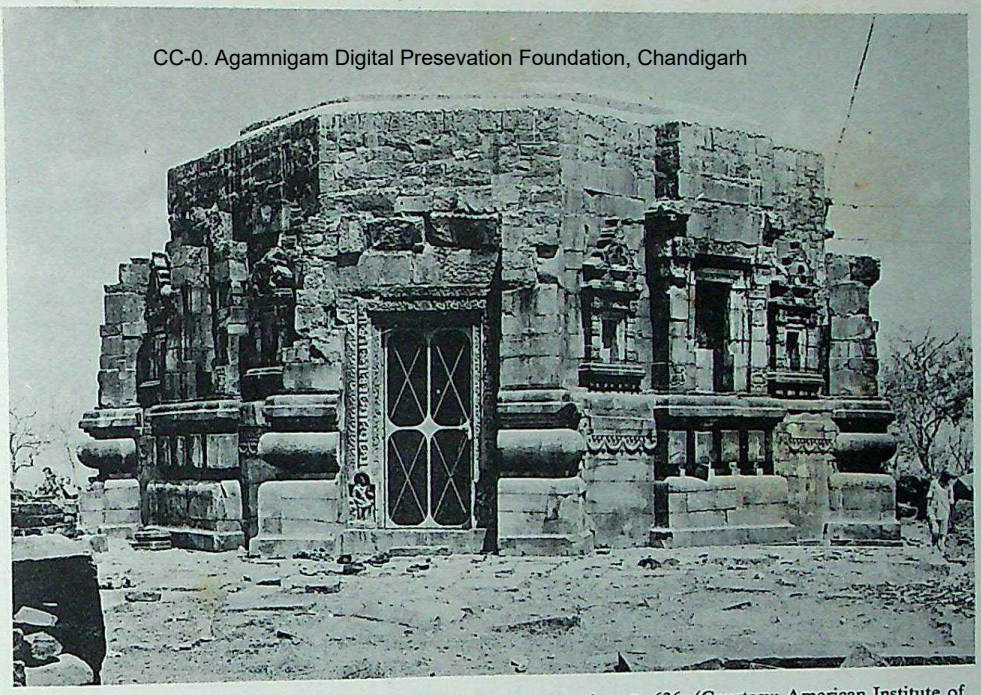

Plate 138. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, general view from south. A.D. 636. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 139. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, southern doorway. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

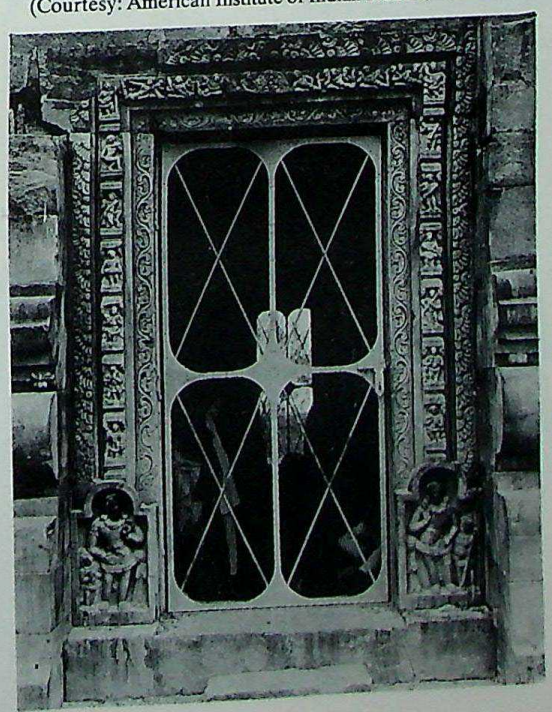

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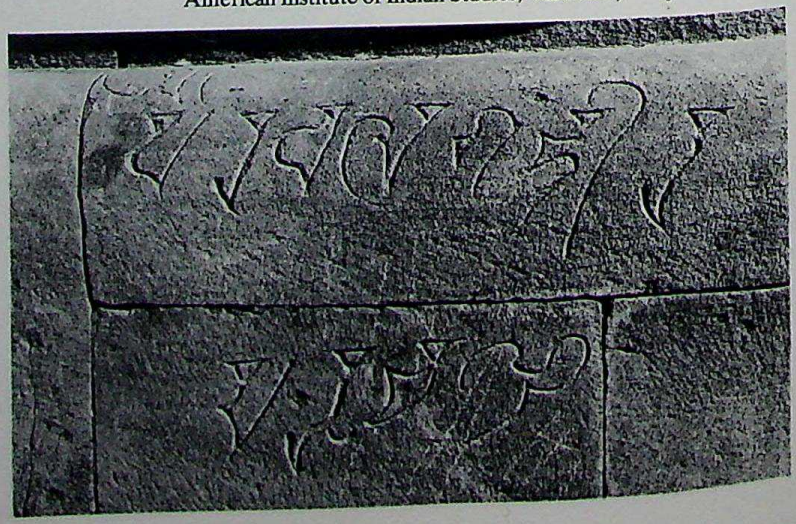
Plate 140. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, inscribed image of Hari-hara. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 141. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, graffiti on the *vedibandha*. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)



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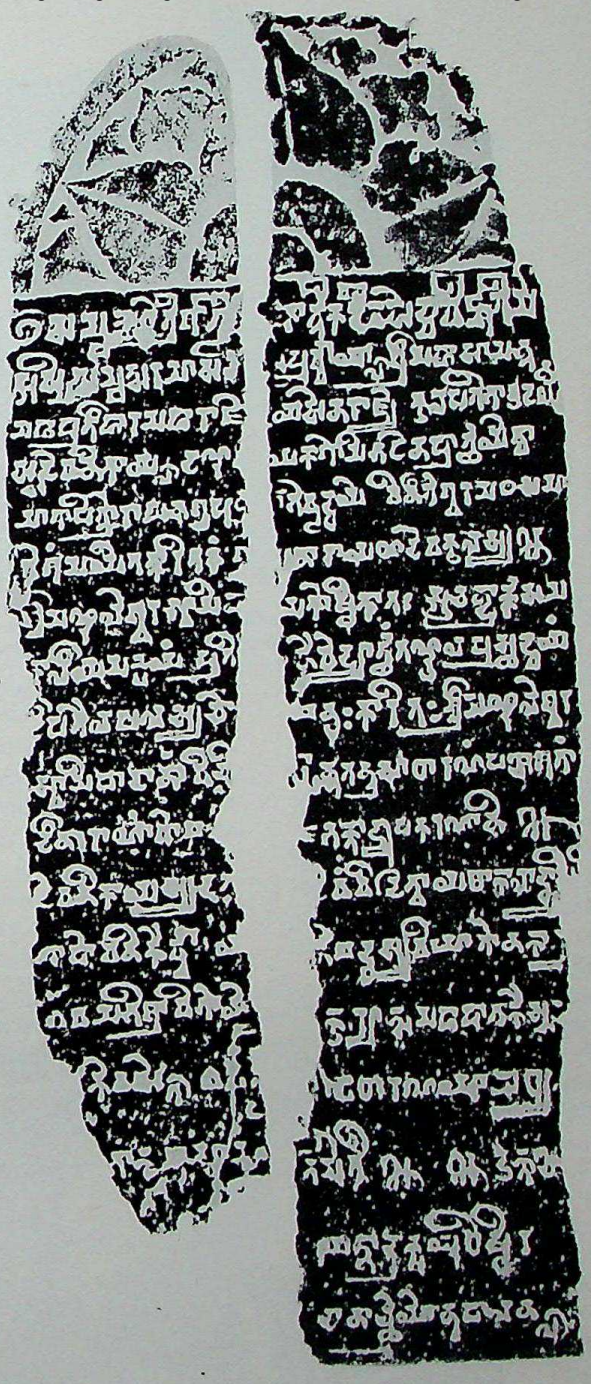

Plate 142. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple inscription. (Now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.) A.D. 636.

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Plate 140. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, inscribed image of Hari-hara. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 141. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple, graffiti on the *vedībandha*. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

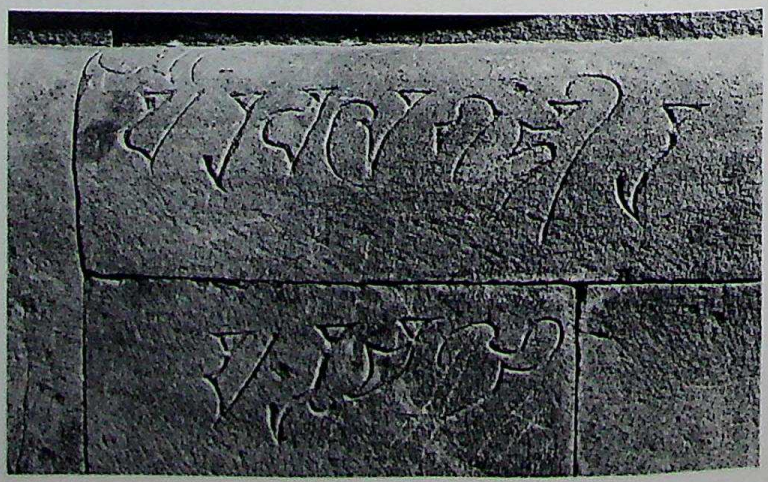

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Plate 142. Rāmgarh. Muṇḍeśvarī temple inscription. (Now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.) A.D. 636.

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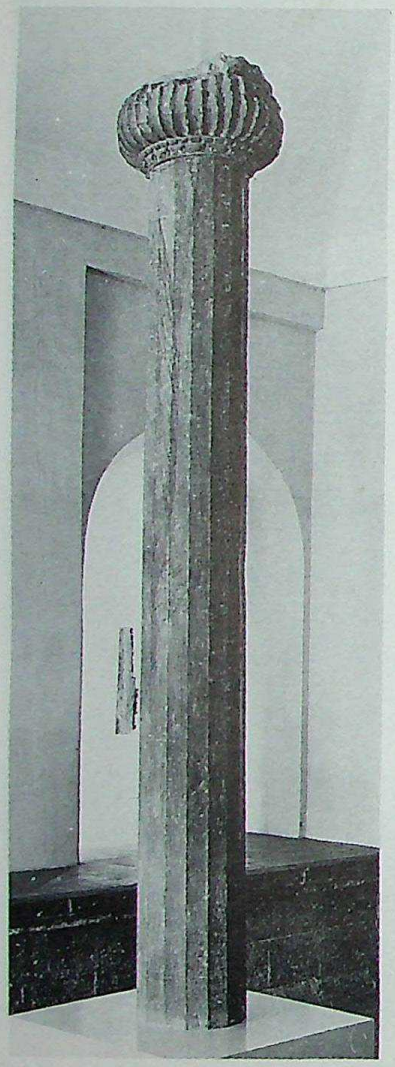

Plate 143. Mahākūṭa. *Dharma-jaya-stambha* of Maṅgaleśa. Early Calukya. Dated 12 April 602 (Ś. 525). Now in Bijapur Museum. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 144. Aihole. Rāvaṇa Phaḍi Complex. Early Calukya. Mid 6th century for cave and temple to the right, early to mid 8th century for two temple structures flanking the cave.

Plate 145. Mahākūṭa. Southern *pratoli*, exterior from the south, with figures locally identified as the *rākṣasās* Ilvala and Vātāpi. Rāṣṭrakūṭa. Late 8th to early 9th century A.D.

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17

The Date of the Lakṣmaṇa Temple at Sirpur

AJAY MITRA SHASTRI

THE LAKṢMAṆA TEMPLE at Sirpur in the Raipur District of Madhya Pradesh[1] (Plate 134) is rightly described by Coomaraswamy as "one of the most beautiful in all India" and as "unsurpassed in the richness and refinement of ornamentation."[2] This beautiful example of early Nāgara-śikhara temple stands on a stone *jagatī* (platform), and is built of elegantly molded and carved bricks (Plates 135 and 136). H. Cousens, who visited the temple in 1904, observed that the bricks used in this temple were of finer make than any he had seen.[3] Though considerably damaged,[4] in its original state it must have been one of the most interesting early brick temples.

Important information about the construction of this temple is got from a large versified stone inscription found while removing the débris of its *maṇḍapa*, (now deposited in the M.G.M. Museum at Raipur).[5] The stone bearing this epigraph was evidently embedded in one of the walls inside the *maṇḍapa*. The inscription belongs to the time of Śivagupta (or Mahaśivagupta as he is called in copper-plate charters) Bālārjuna, the last known chief of the Pāṇḍava dynasty of Dakṣiṇa Kosala. Its object is to record that his widowed mother Vāsaṭā caused a temple of Hari to be built in memory of her deceased husband Harṣagupta. The inscription also registers the numerous benefactions made in favor of this temple, specifying the manner and purpose of their use and elaborating the arrangements made for the management of temple affairs.[6] The temple of Hari referred to in this inscription is doubtless the same as the temple now known as Lakṣmaṇa, which evidently is a misnomer. How this name came into vogue cannot be ascertained in the present state of knowledge. It is interesting to note in this connection that a large statue of Viṣṇu was found lying outside this temple,[7] and, as Cunningham observed,[8] the image must have belonged to the so-called Lakṣmaṇa temple. Furthermore, the *avatāras* of Viṣṇu are carved on the door-jambs, and one of the broken pilasters bears a figure of Varāha.

There is considerable difference of opinion about the date of this temple. Cunningham noted that the carvings on the door-jambs (Plate 137) are in the Gupta style comparable to that noticed at Eraṇ and thought that the temple must have been constructed in the last quarter of the fifth century A.D., which, according to him, was the regnal period of Śivagupta Bālārjuna.[9] While the period contemplated by Cunningham for Śivagupta is too early, it has to be admitted that the attribution of the temple to his reign has, like so many of his other intuitive suggestions, proved to be correct in the light of the evidence that came to light afterwards.[10] Coomaraswamy assigned it to the reign of Harṣa, i.e. earlier half of the seventh century A.D.[11] According to J.A. Page, it was constructed in the ninth century A.D.[12] Percy Brown seems to be uncertain about this question as at one place he refers to the view that this and other temples at Sirpur are assigned to the tenth century A.D.[13] while elsewhere he places the temple in *c.* 800 A.D.[14] This divergence of opinion and uncertainty about the age of the temple is

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due to the fact that there is not universal agreement about the date of Śivagupta Bālārjuna during whose reign it was built. It is therefore important to consider the question of the date of Śivagupta, which alone will help to determine the age of the Lakṣmaṇa temple.

As stated above, Cunningham thought that Śivagupta flourished during the closing quarter of the fifth century A.D. But this very early date has not found general acceptance. Moreover, this computation was based upon the supposed identification of this Śivagupta with the homonymous Somavaṁśī king of Orissa. According to the traditional palmleaf records called Madala-pañjīs, the Orissan Śivagupta ruled in the time of Yayāti or Yayātikesarī, whose dates of 474–526 (or 473–520) had been proposed by Sterring and were generally accepted. But it has been shown that the evidence of Madala-pañjīs is, by and large, not trustworthy for historical purposes, and no historian now takes it seriously.[15] J.F. Fleet,[16] F. Kielhorn[17] and Hira Lal[18] dated the reign of Tīvaradeva, grand uncle of Śivagupta, around 800 A.D.; accordingly the reign of Śivagupta was dated in the ninth century A.D.[19] This date, which was based on palaeographical, linguistic and stylistic evidence, held ground for several decades until V.V. Mirashi challenged these views and proposed another chronology placing these rulers at a much earlier date. He suggested various dates in the second and third quarters of the sixth century A.D.[20] for Tīvaradeva and dated the reign of Śivagupta between 595 and 655 A.D.,[21] thus taking back the dates of these chiefs by over two centuries. The principal bases of this chronology were the identification of Trivara-nagara mentioned in the Īpūr[22] and Polamuru (Pulomburu)[23] plates of the Viṣṇukuṇḍī ruler Mādhvavarmā with Śrīpura, the capital of Tīvaradeva, thereby making Tīvaradeva and Mādhavavarmā contemporaries and of the king Sūryavarmā, maternal grandfather of Śivagupta$_2$,[24] with the homonymous son of the Maukhari chief Iśānavarmā known from the Harāhā inscription dated Vikrama 611 or 554 A.D.[25] There was no doubt about the date of the Maukhari Sūryavarmā, as his Harāhā inscription is dated in a well-known reckoning; however, the chronology of the Viṇsukuṇḍīs, whose records discovered until then are dated only in the regnal years of the monarchs concerned, was computed on the assumption that Vikramendravarmā II, the last known chief of the dynasty, continued to rule up to the beginning of the fourth decade of the seventh century A.D., when the Viṣṇukuṇḍīs were wiped out by the Early Caḷukya emperor Pulakeśī II (609–642 A.D.).[26] According to this chronology Mādhavavarmā's reign was dated from *c.* 535 to 585 A.D.[27]

This chronology was taken for granted until a few years ago. But the recently discovered Indrapālanagara plates of Vikramendravarmā II,[28] which alone among the Viṣṇukuṇḍī records are dated in a popular reckoning, show that the eleventh year of his reign coincided with Śaka 488 or 566/67 A.D. It is thus clear that he came to power somewhere in 555/56 A.D. He was preceded by his father Indrabhaṭṭārakavarmā, whose latest known date is the twenty-seventh regnal year.[29] No record of the latter's father, Vikramendravarmā I, has been found, but there is no doubt that he ruled for some time, since in the records of his descendants he is accorded the regal titles *Rājan* and *Mahārāja*.[30] Vikramendravarmā I was preceded in ruling the kingdom by his illustrious father Mādhavavarmā Janāśraya, the most powerful member of the dynasty. Supposing that Indrabhaṭṭārakavarmā ruled only for twenty-seven years and assigning a short rule of just ten years to his father Vikramendravarmā I, the end of Mādhavavarmā's reign cannot be placed later than 418/19 A.D. In case one were to allow a few more years for Indrabhaṭṭārakavarmā's reign beyond his latest recorded date and more than a decade to Vikramendravarmā I, the date for the termination of Madhavavarmā's reign would fall a few years earlier. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that Mādhavavarmā had ceased to rule before the earliest date proposed for Tīvaradeva's accession, namely 520 A.D., not to speak of other dates.[31] Thus, the contemporaniety of Tīvaradeva and Mādhavavarmā cannot be established. The question of the identification of the two Sūryavarmās also cannot be upheld in the light of the following discussion, which will show that Harṣagupta, the Pāṇḍuvaṁśī king who married Sūryavarmā's daughter, flourished too late to have any relationship with the Maukhari prince of that name.

It is conceded by common consensus that the Paṇḍuvaṁśīs rose to power after the Śarabhapurīyas. Therefore a brief discussion of the chronology of the Śarabhapurīya rule over Dakṣiṇa Kosala will help determine the chronology of the Pāṇḍuvaṁsīs. Indeed, very few Sarabhapurīya records were known when Mirashi proposed the above-noted chronology.[32] Two-thirds of the now known records of the dynasty came to light thereafter. This fact, then,

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necessitates a review of the whole problem. Śarabha, the first chief of the family who founded the dynastic capital Śarabhapura, christening it after his own name, is generally identified with Śarabharāja, the maternal grandfather of Goparāja who died fighting a battle in the company of his friend Bhānugupta at Eraṇ in 510 A.D.[33] and is, accordingly, placed in the closing years of the fifth century A.D.[34] The known regnal years of his descendants total forty-six years, i.e., twenty-four years of Śarabha's son Narendra, nine years of Jayarāja, ten years of Sudevarāja and three years of Pravararāja.[35] There are at least two more princes of the dynasty who are known to have ruled but whose inscriptions are yet to be discovered. They are Prasanna or Prasannamātra,[36] who flourished before Jayarāja and some time after Narendra, and Durgarāja *alias* Mānamātra,[37] who came to power between Jayarāja and Sudevarāja. It is not certain if Prasannamātra was the immediate successor of Narendra, and it is possible, though by no means certain, that the reign of these two kings was intervened by the reign of another. If one allows a period of about thirty-five years to cover these two (or more in case Prasannamātra, who was not Narendra's immediate successor) reigns and another nine years for the excess of the known reigns beyond the latest recorded years, which is not unreasonable, the date arrived at for the close of the Śarabhapurīya rule is *c.* 590 A.D. Then it is known from the Mallār plates of Vyāghrarāja that at least two members of the Amarāryakula ruled in Dakṣiṇa Kosala.[38] Two recently discovered Mallār plates of the Pāṇḍava rulers of Mekalā, one of the last known members of the dynasty, Śūrabala,[39] and the other incomplete,[40] show that Śūrabala also ruled for some time in Dakṣiṇa Kosala. And lastly the reign of Tīvaradeva appears to have been preceded by three or four reigns of his predecessors, namely Indrabala and his sons Īśānadeva, Bhavadeva and Nanna. If one allows a period of six decades for all these events, the reign of Tīvaradeva could not have commenced before the middle of the seventh century A.D. The reigns of Tīvaradeva, his son Nannarāja II, brother Candragupta and nephew Harṣagupta may be reasonably allowed a period of about seventy-five years, up to *c.* 725 A.D. The reign of Harṣagupta's son—Śivagupta Bālārjuna, during whose reign the Lakṣmaṇa temple was built—covered about six decades,[41] and so may have lasted until about 785 A.D. It must, of course, be remembered that these dates are only approximate and may have to be modified in the light of the evidence that comes to light in the future. But if such a modification becomes necessary, it is not likely to affect materially the general chronology proposed in these pages.

It would follow from the foregoing discussion that the so-called Lakṣmaṇa temple at Sirpur, which was constructed by Vāsaṭā during the reign of her son Śivagupta Bālārjuna, has to be dated about the middle of the eighth century A.D.

NOTES

1. For the description of this temple, *see A.S.I.*, Vol. XVII, pp. 27–29; A.H. Longhurst in *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1909–10, pp. 11 ff.

2. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, New York 1965, p. 93, pl. 186. Also *see* S.K. Saraswati in R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Classical Age*, first edition, Bombay 1954, p. 513, Pl. XVI, 32.

3. *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of Western India for 1904*, p. 20.

4. The top of its *śikhara* has fallen and the *maṇḍapa* has completely collapsed.

5. For details *see* Hira Lal, "Sirpur Stone Inscription of the time of Mahāśivagupta," *E.I.*, Vol. XI (1911–12), p. 184.

6. For the text of the inscription *see ibid.*, pp. 190–193, and for translation pp. 194–197.

7. *A.S.R.*, Vol. XVII, Pl. XVII.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

9. *Ibid.*

10. The correctness of this conjecture is proved by the Lakṣmaṇa temple inscription of Śivagupta's mother Vāsaṭā.

11. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 93.

12. *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1923–24, p. 28.

13. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, third edition, Bombay 1956, p. 51.

14. *Ibid.*, p. x (list of illustrations).

15. For a detailed discussion on this point, *see*

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J.F. Fleet, "Records of the Sōmavaṁśi Kings of Kaṭak," *E.I.*, Vol. III (1894–95), pp. 323 ff.

16. He thought that Tīvaradeva could not be allotted to an earlier date than roughly 800 A.D. *See* J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 294.

17. F. Kielhorn was inclined to place the Rājim copper-plate inscription of Tīvaradeva about the middle of the eighth century and an inscription of Śivagupta from Sirpur about the beginning of the ninth century A.D. *See* F. Kielhorn, "Kudopali Plates of time of Mahā-Bhavagupta," *E.I.*, Vol. IV (1896–97), p. 258.

18. According to Hira Lal, the characters of the Lakṣmaṇa temple inscription of Śivagupta belong to the eighth or ninth century A.D. *See* Hiralal, "Sirpur Stone Inscription," pp. 184 and 185. It must be remembered that Hira Lal placed the Pāṇḍuvaṁsīs before the Śarabhapurīyas.

19. The reigns of Śivagupta and Tīvaradeva were intervened by three reigns, namely of Nannarāja II, Candragupta and Harṣagupta. At the time when this chronology was propounded, the Adbhāra plates of Nannarāja II (*E.I.*, Vol. XXXI, pp. 219–222) were not known, and so only two reigns were believed to have intervened between them.

20. The question was first discussed at length while editing the Thakurdīya plates of the Śarabhapurīya king Pravararāja. *See* "Thākurdīyā Plates of Mahā-Pravararāja," *E.I.*, Vol. XXII (1933–34), pp. 16–22. His latest view is that Tīvaradeva came to power in 520 A.D. *See* V.V. Mirashi, "The Date of Tīvaradeva," *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. IV (1977), pp. 1–5. For the different dates proposed by him, *see* Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Were Madhavavaraman I and Tivaradeva Contemporaries?" *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 20.

21. He places Śivagupta's accession in 595 A.D. *vide* V.V. Mirashi, "Bonda Plates of Mahasivagupta, Year 22," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXV (1963–64), p. 63. Śivagupta appears to have ruled for about sixty years, his latest known regnal year being fifty-seven. *See* Lochan Prasad Pandeya, "Lodhiā Plates of Mahā-Śivagupta, Year 57," *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 319–325 (Lodhiā plates) and Ajay Mitra Shastri, " A Stray Somavaṁśī Copper-plate," *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, Vol. XV, pp. 117-120. Earlier Mirashi had suggested 590-650 A.D. for his reign. *See* V.V. Mirashi, "A Note on the Date of the Sōmavaṁśī King of South Kosala," *E.I.*, Vol. XXVI (1941–42), p. 229.

22. E. Hultzsch, "Īpūr Plates of Gōvindavarman's son Mādhavavarman," *E.I.*, Vol. XVII (1923–24), pp. 336 ff.

23. R. Subba Rao, "The Palombura Plates of Vishnukundin Madhavavarma," *Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, Vol. VI (1931), pp. 20 ff.

24. This fact is known from the Lakṣmaṇa temple inscription.

25. Hirananda Sastri, "Harāhā Inscription of the Reign of Īśānavarman," *E.I.*, Vol. XIV (1917–18), pp. 110 ff.

26. D.C. Sircar in R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The Classical Age*, pp. 210–211.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

28. M. Rama Rao, "New Light on the Visnukundins," *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XLIII (1965), pp. 733–46. The importance of these plates for the reconstruction of the Viṣṇukuṇḍī geneology has been discussed by the present author. *See* Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Fresh light on the History of the Visnukundins," *Ibid.*, Vol. XLIV (1966), pp. 683–91.

29. This is the date of his Rāmatīrtham plates.

30. These titles are employed for him in the Rāmatīrtham plates of his son Indrabhaṭṭārakavarmā and the Indrapālanagara plates of his grandson Vikramendravarmā II respectively.

31. For a fuller discussion of this problem, *see* Ajay Mitra Shastri, "A Note on the Īpūr and Polamuru Plates of Mādhavavarman I," *Sri Mallampalli Somaśekhara Sarma Commemoration Volume, Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society*, XXXV, (1975–76), pp. 165–168: "Were Madhavavarman I and Tīvaradeva Contemporaries?" pp. 20–25; "A Note on the date of Tīvaradeva," *Journal of Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. VI (1979), pp. 5–11.

32. Only six records, namely Ārāṅg Plates of Jayarāja, Nanna, Ārāṅg, Rāipur and Sarangarh plates of Sudevarāja and Thakurdīya plates of Pravararāja, were available at that time. The name of Narendra was totally unknown.

33. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, pp. 91–93.

34. D.C. Sircar, "Mallār Plates of Jayarāja, Year 5," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIII (1959–60), p. 156. Mirashi proposed for him a slightly earlier date. But even if this date is admitted, the chronology proposed in these pages will be affected only to the extent of a few years. One may arrive at about the end of the fifth century A.D. for the beginning of the Śarabhapurīya rule in south Kosala on some other grounds also. It is

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held that the box-headed characters were adopted in Dakṣiṇa Kosala due to the influence of the Vākāṭakas which probably was first felt during the reign of Narendrasena, whose commands are said to have been obeyed by the lords of Mekalā, Mālava and Kosala. Narendrasena's son and successor Pṛthivīṣeṇa II was a powerful ruler and appears to have retained all the territories and the sphere of influence inherited by him. Pṛthivīṣeṇa II ruled up to about the close of the fifth century A.D. It was, thus, only after this that an independent power could come into existence in Dakṣiṇa Kosala. Secondly, it is commonly admitted that the characters of the Sarabhapurīya grants are more developed than those of the Vākāṭaka records.

35. The latest known years of these reigns are known from D.C. Sircar, "Note on Kurud Plates of Narēndra, Year 24," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXI (1955–56), pp. 263–268. G. Bhattacharya and M. Sivayya, "Mallār Plates of Jayarāja, Year 9," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–62), pp. 28–31; "Raipur Plates of Sudevarāja," *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, pp. 196–200; and G. Bhattacharya, "Mallār Plates of Pravara II, Year 3," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–62), pp. 51–52.

36. He is known from his repoussé coins and from references in the seal-inscriptions of the later members of the dynasty. He is the only member of the dynasty whose coins are known.

37. He, too, is known from references in the records of his successors.

38. D.C. Sircar and G. Bhattacharya, "Mallār Plates," pp. 47–52.

39. B. Sitaram and M.J. Sharma, "Mallār Plates of Pāṇḍava King Śūrabala: Year 8," *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. III (1976), pp. 183–189.

40. K.D. Bajpai, "New Light on the Early Pāṇḍava Dynasty of South Kosala," *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Diamond Jubilee Volume, Poona 1978 (Vols. LVIII and LIX for 1977–78), pp. 433–437.

41. His latest known regnal year is fifty-seven.

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18

Translation and Interpretation of the Kusumā Inscription

RICHARD SALOMON

THE INSCRIPTION from Kusumā is written on a broken stone now located in the Mandor Museum, near Jodhpur, Rājasthān. It was reported to have been found at Kusumā, in Sirohi District of the same state. The fragmentary inscription consists of thirteen lines of Sanskrit verse written in the semi-ornate *Siddhamātṛkā* (or *Kuṭila*) script typical of western India in the seventh century A.D. It describes the construction in the year 693 of a temple of Śiva at the āśrama of Kutsa by one Satyabhaṭa, who is otherwise unknown.[1] At the bottom of the stone, below the *Siddhamātṛkā* inscription, is a damaged line of very ornate shell script.

The Kusumā inscription was published by D.C. Sircar in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. 36 (1965–6), pp. 47–49 + plate, without a translation. The text of the inscription given below mainly follows Sircar's reading, with a few minor alterations.

Text

1. .....

2. yaśaś-śakalair=iva pravitatā yudhi yasya pabhubhu (?)- .....

3. tphull-āvataṁsa-sphuṭa-mukuṭa-ghaṭā-koti-ghṛṣṭo ...../ /* ****

4. ***sya cirāya ripubhi[ḥ*] sthitaṁ / yen=ānekāḥ krīḍat [ā] na [p]ra******[/ /*] .....

5. d-ānandit-āli-ku[la-pa]llavam=udvahantī [/*] paryullasat-kiraṇa-maṁjarit-[ā]si-yaṣṭ[iḥ] ... [/ /*] .....

6. nūnair = iva yasya n = ārthibhiḥ kaluṣitaṁ cetaḥ / / Śaśadhara-dhavala-prabh-āvabhāsa-iś=śabalayato bhuvan-āntara[ṁ]-ś[ī*]rṇ [ai*]ḥ [/*]..[/ /*]*...[/*]

7. Yasya saṁgrāma-lubdhena bāhunā duḥkham = āsitaṁ / / ya[syānu]jaḥ Satyabhaṭo bhaṭānām=agresaraḥ saṁgara-saṁkaṭeṣu/utkhāta .....

8. parāgat-oru-śikhara[ṁ] pu(pū) [r/ṇn-āntar-[ikṣa-sthitaṁ]/siddhair=dṛṣṭam=udagra-hṛṣṭa-vadan [ai]s= saudha[ṁ] Vijetuḥ Purām[2]=etat=tena samaṁ nijena yaśasā ka [lpa] ..... [/ /*].[/*]....

9. tvā vidy[ul-l]e[kh]ā-[ca]ṁ[ca*]le jīva-loke [/ /*] Kusuma-saurabha-lobha-pari[bhrame bhramara-vi-bhra]ma-dāyini dakṣiṇe/maruti vati vi[bodhi]ta ..... [/ /*].....

10. viśāla-deva-bhavane stha (sthā)snu dhvaj-ādhaḥ kṛtaṁ / siddh ādhyasita-randhra-guccha-gahana-cchann-occhalan-mekhalaṁ[3] Meroḥ śṛṅgam=ivedam=āśrama-pa[daṁ] ka[lpa] ..... [/ /*] .....

11. daṁ bibhartti / dhatte c-oddāma-rāmā-stana-ja-ghana-bhar-ābhogam=arddhena Sambhuḥ sadm=aitat= tāvad=āstām=acalam-iha muner=āśrame Kutsanāmna [ḥ*]/ / Tāṇḍavaṁ ..... [/*].....[/ /*] .....

12. sya dvijanmanaḥ / sununā Śivaguptena kṛtā pūrvvā viḍampa (ba)nā[4]/ / Mātṛviṣṇu-tanūjasya Rudravatsasya sūnunā / utkīrṇā Sthāvā(va)r-ā[kh]-

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yeṇa(na) kṣattriye[ṇa] ..... [/ /*]
13.600 90 3 Caitra-śu 5

Translation

1. .....

2. ... (the mighty one?) whose ... is spread in battle as if with sparks of glory ....

3. ...[* whose feet are] rubbed by crores of gleaming crowns with heavy ornaments ...

4. .... enemies stood for long; by whom at play ... not ...

5. ... the shaft of his sword, blooming with the sun's rays as they play upon it, and blossoming with a swarm of delighted bees....

6. ... whose heart was not troubled by supplicants, as if (entire?) ... / / Speckling the space between heaven and earth (with fragments?) shining like bright moonbeams ...

7. ... by whose arm, delighting in battle, sorrow was brought to rest (or, "... was brought to sorrow"). / / Whose younger brother Satyabhaṭa, leader of warriors in the perils of battle, excavated ...

8. ... this palace of the Conqueror of the Cities (Śiva), its broad tower (covered with?) ....., standing in the open sky, beheld by the saints with delighted and enraptured faces, together with his own glory; ...

9. ... in this world of the living which is fleeting as a streak of lightning. / / When the south wind was blowing bringing rapture to the bees as they wandered in search of flowers' perfume awakened ...

10. in this great house of God was made firm below the flag. This hermitage-ground, like the peak of Mount Meru, its slopes waving with their thick covering of forest-shrubs, and saints dwelling in its caves ....

11. ....carries; and [as long as] Śambhu (Śiva) bears with one half (of his body) the full weight of that noble lady's breasts and hips; so long may this temple stand unshaken[5] here is the hermitage of the sage named Kutsa./ / The dance (of Śiva) ...

12. ... This preceding (eulogy),[6] a (mere) imitation (as it were),[7] was composed by Śivagupta, son of the Brāhmaṇa ... / / It was inscribed by the kṣatriya named Sthāvara, son of Rudravatsa who was born of Mātṛ-viṣṇu ...

13. [The year] 693, 5th day of the bright fortnight of Caitra.

The shell character inscription at the bottom of the stone is much defaced, as it appears in the plate in *E.I.*, Vol. 36. It seems to have consisted of a single line of characters with a continuous elaborately flourished decoration of the typical shell type below. From the plate, it is not clear whether or not the shell inscription was written at the same time as the *Siddhamātṛkā* one; but if it was, it is one of the latest datable specimens of shell script yet discovered.[8] In any case, this is the first known specimen of this script in Rājasthān.

The significance of the main Kusumā inscription for art history is its possible relation with the Rāmacandrajī temple at Kusumā, described in two recent articles by Michael W. Meister.[9] Meister sees the Kusumā temple as an important chronological landmark in the development of western Indian temple architecture, on the assumption that the temple dedicated in the dated Kusumā inscription can be identified with the present Rāmacandrajī temple in the same place. *A priori*, this seems to be a reasonable assumption: The temple in question is a Śaiva monument, as described in the inscription and is "consonant in style"[10] with the time of the inscription. There are, however, some problems in reconciling the description of the temple in the inscription (as interpreted by Sircar) with Meister's observations of the Rāmacandrajī temple. It is with a view to clearing up these problems that I undertook the further study of this inscription.

The date and provenance of the inscription pose no serious problems. The year is given as 693 without specification of an era, but as Sircar (p. 47) points out, this date "must be referred to the Vikrama Saṁvat so that it corresponds to 636/7 A.D."[11] Neither is there any reason to doubt the accuracy of the attribution of the findspot of the inscription to Kusumā, as the text itself refers to the site as "the *āśrama* of the sage named Kutsa" (line 11, *muner-āśrame Kutsa-nāmnaḥ*). The normal (i.e. non-poetic) name of the place would thus have been *Kutsāśrama*, which would be expected to develop into the modern name Kusumā (also given as Kusmā and Kūsma).[12]

The problems arise, however, in connection with the description of the temple as "apparently situated on a hill" (Sircar, p. 47); for the Rāmacandrajī temple observed by Meister stands not on a hill, but rather on level ground at the foot of a hill. Now if the phrase *pūrṇṇāntarikṣasthitaṁ* (line 8) is to be taken literally as describing a temple (*saudha*) "standing in the open sky," the temple of the inscription can hardly be identified with the present Kusumā temple.

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However, a comparison of similar passages in other inscriptions of the same general period shows that one need not necessarily adopt a literal interpretation of the phrase in question. Thus the Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta and Bandhuvarmā (*C.I.I.*, Vol. III, 83, line 20) reads: ... *Bhānumato gṛham / / Atyunnatam avadātaṃ nabha[ḥ] spṛśann* [sic] *iva manoharaiḥ śikharaiḥ*, "A temple of the Sun, extremely lofty, bright, seeming to touch the sky with its beautiful spires." Here the description of the temple as touching the sky with its spires is clearly rhetorical; and it is significant that the similar hyperbolic description in the Kusumā inscription comes immediately after a (mostly lost) description of its broad spire(s) (*uru-śikharaṁ*).

Other passages of the Kusumā inscription apparently suggestive of a location on a mountain may be similarly interpreted on the basis of parallel passages as rhetorical rather than literal. Thus the description of the temple as "beheld by the saints with delighted (or, upraised, *udagra*) faces" is paralleled by the Gangdhar inscription of Viśvavarmā, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 76, lines 30–1: *Viṣṇoḥ sthānam=akārayad ...// Kailāsa-tunga-sikhar-appratimasya yasya dṛṣṭv= akṛtiṃ pramuditai=r=vv=adanara-vindaiḥ vidyadharāḥ... yānty avalokayantaḥ,* "He constructed a temple of Viṣṇu, ... whose shape resembling the lofty peaks of Mount Kailāsa the Vidyādharas gaze down on as they go (flying) by with delighted faces."

Similarly, the Kusumā inscription's comparison in line 10 of the hermitage-ground (*āśrama-pada*) as "like the peak of Mount Meru" calls to mind verse 9 of the Indragarh inscription (*Journal of the Orissa Research Society*, Vol. 41 (1955), p. 260, line 11):[13] *Svayambho=r=lokanāthasya śailaṁ śilavatā svayaṁ/ Ten-edaṁ kāritaṁ divyaṁ mandiraṁ Mandar-opamam / /*, "That virtuous man himself constructed this divine stone temple of svayambhu, Lord of the Worlds, which is equal to Mount Mandara." Here, however, the further description of the Kusumā "hermitage-grounds" as having "its slopes waving with their thick covering of forest-shrubs," etc., does suggest that here one may have a description of a real, rather than a metaphorical, hill. But this still need not contradict the hypothesis that the inscription described the still-standing Rāmacandrajī temple, as the *āśrama-pada* may here refer to the hill which stands nearby that *temple*.[14]

In conclusion, the phrases—notably *pūrṇṇ-antarikṣa-sthitam*—in the Kusumā inscription which seem to de-scribe a temple on a hill may be considered rhetorical, rather than literal, on the grounds of comparison with other inscriptions containing similar poetic expression. It is therefore not unreasonable to believe that this inscription probably records the dedication of the Rāmacandrajī temple at modern Kusumā, which in other respects, geographical and chronological, seems appropriate to it. If this hypothesis is correct, the temple becomes, in effect, a dated monument with important consequences for the study of temple architecture in western India; but I leave the further discussion of this importance to the art historians.

NOTES

1. Unless he is to be identified with Vajrabhaṭa Satyāśraya of the Vasantgaḍh inscription of Vikrama 682, *E.I.*, Vol. IX. (1907–8), pp. 189–192.

2. Sircar: *purā(ra)m. Purāṁ Vijetṛ* is attested in *Kirātārjunīya* 5.35, and is correct according to Pāṇini 2.3.65, [*ṣaṣṭhi*] *kartṛkarmaṇoḥ kṛti* (Kāśikā: *purāṁ bhettā*). Pāṇini 2.3.69, *Na lokāvyayaniṣṭhākhalarthatṛnām*, which would prescribe an accusative form, does not apply, as the suffix of *Vijetṛ* is *tṛc* and not *tṛn*.

3. Sircar: *mekhalāṁ*.

4. Sircar: *pūrvv=āviḍampa(ba)nā*. See note 7

5. *Acalam* has a punning double meaning, "unshaken" and "(like) a mountain." *Cf. Śailam* in the Indragarh inscription, cited in note 13.

6. As noted by Sircar (p. 48), *pūrvā* in this sense, referring to an understood *praśasti*, is well known in inscriptions of this period. *Cf. C.I.I.*, Vol. III, p. 84, line 23, *Purvvā ceyaṁ prayatnena racitā Vatsabhaṭṭinā; ibid.*, p. 87, note 10, 207, line 27; and D.R. Bhandarkar, "Pūrvā," *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. I (1938), pp. 142–143.

7. *Cf.* note 4 above. The reading *pūrvvā viḍampa(ba)nā*, rather than *pūrvvāviḍampa(ba)nā* (i.e. *pūrvvā-aviḍambanā*) is based on a parallel passage in the Udaypur inscription of Guhila Aparājita (*E.I.*, Vol. IV [1897–98], p. 32), line 11: *Nāmnā Dāmo*

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dareṇaiva kṛtā kāvyaviḍambanā. Kielhorn (*ibid.*, p. 30) renders this as "a mockery of a poem." This unusual expression is evidently an expression of modesty on the part of the poet.

8. See my "Preliminary Report on the Shell Inscription," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. XI (1977–78), Supplement pp. 1–32 (Part I; Part II forthcoming).

9. "Preliminary Report on the Śiva Temple at Kusumā," *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. XXVII (1973–74), pp. 77–91, and "A Field Report on Temples at Kusumā," *ibid.*, Vol. XXIX (1975–76), pp. 23–43.

10. Meister, "Preliminary Report," p. 78.

11. D.R. Bhandarkar (*E.I.*, Vol. IX, 1907–08, p. 189) notes that "Almost all of the dates of the inscriptions found in Mālwā and Rājpūtānā, the era of which is not specified and which are capable of being verified, have been shown to belong to the Vikrama era."

12. This Sanskritized spelling probably represents an actual pronunciation Kusuwā or Kusawā; a perfect parallel is the inscription from modern Kaṇaswā (or Kaṇsuwā, Kaṇsuvāṁ), giving the ancient name of the place as *Kaṇvāśrama* (*I.A.*, Vol. XIX [1890], pp. 55–62).

13. See also Krishna Deva, "Indragadh Inscription of Nannappa, V.S. 767," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXII, Part III (1957), p. 116.

14. Because the verse in question (line 10) is incomplete, it is not possible to be sure what was the physical relation of the temple and the *āśrama-pada* on the hill mentioned therein. Sircar (p. 48) with due caution says only that the hermitage is mentioned "in relation to the shrine."

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The Śītaleśvara Mahādeva Temple at Candrāvatī: Epigraphical Evidence

CAROL G. LIN-BODIEN

THE ŚĪTALEŚVARA MAHĀDEVA temple at Candrāvatī in Jhālāvād district of modern Rājasthān is one of a few monuments in the early history of north Indian temple architecture thought to be firmly dated by inscription.[1] The inscription is dated in the year 746, equal to 689/690 A.D. when calculated in the Vikrama era. The connection between this inscription and the Śītaleśvara temple, however, is problematic. There is no evidence that the inscription was found on or near the building itself or even at the site of Candrāvatī; on the contrary, all historical indications point to nearby Jhālrāpāṭan as findspot where the inscription seems to have lain at least through the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, an examination of the scholarly literature surrounding the Śītaleśvara temple and the inscription of 689/690 A.D. is important for questions concerning the inscription's findspot, and can also serve as a valuable case study that illustrates how an inscription can come to be associated with a monument in the absence of any unimpeachable evidence.

The site of the old city of Candrāvatī is located on the banks of the Candrabhāgā river one mile south of the new town of Jhālrāpāṭan at the westernmost edge of Mālvā. Abundant ruins at the site, local tradition and numerous fragments used as building materials in Jhālrāpātan attest to Candrāvatī as a town and important religious site with many temples from at least the fifth century A.D.[2] The Śītaleśvara Mahādeva is the largest as well as the earliest remaining monument at the site. The temple preserves an early *mūlaprāsāda* with its doorframe, a narrow *antarāla* and a shallow *mukhamaṇḍapa*. These components lack the original superstructure, and a much later pillared *maṇḍapa* is joined to the early *mukhamaṇḍapa*.[3]

The dated inscription in question appears on one side of a stone slab now in the Jhālāvāḍ Museum. The reverse side of the same stone possesses a contemporary inscription. Comparison of the two inscriptions on opposite sides of the stone reveals virtually identical contents through line 5 on the dated side and line 7 on the reverse, where feats of a certain Śrī Durggagaṇa called *narendra-mukhya*, or chief of kings, are enumerated. Thereafter, the dated inscription records the construction of a Śiva temple by Voppaka in the year 746; the reverse inscription is extremely mutilated.[4] The measurements of the stone have not been published, but the dual inscription precludes the theory that the stone could have been originally set into the temple wall.[5]

First mention of this inscription was made in the 1830s by Colonel James Tod. Having arrived at the ruins of Candrāvatī, he praised the temple as "amongst the first things in Asia," and said:

> While I remained with Ghassi, amidst the ruins, I despatched my gūrū and brahmins to take diligent search for inscriptions; but many of these, as well

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> as thousands of divinities, the wrecks of ancient Patun, have built up in the new town or its immense circumvallation; but our efforts were not altogether unrewarded.
>
> The oldest inscription, dated S. 748 (A.D. 692), bore the name of Raja Doorgangul ....[6]

This account by Tod suggests that he did not find the inscription himself. In addition, he neither recorded its findspot (as he was in the habit of doing), nor did he note that the stone was inscribed on two sides. Perhaps Tod did not personally examine the inscription, and instead relied on reports by informants. In any case, he certainly did not connect the inscription with the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva, and the context of his record implies that the inscription was found by assistants in some other undisclosed area, in all probability some distance from the ruins of Candrāvatī; no wonder subsequent explorers at the site, including Fergusson, Cunningham, Garrick and Cousens, could not find the inscription.

The architectural historian James Fergusson next visited Candrāvatī in the 1840s. After a careful study of Tod's account and of the temple, Fergusson considered the dating of the Śītaleśvara temple clearly stating: "there is nothing in the inscription, or its locality, that connects it directly with this temple, though," he conceded "from the greater part of its materials being dispersed, this may have been the case." He concluded that "the most satisfactory means, therefore, for ascertaining its date are its similarities with other buildings whose age is approximately known." Comparing the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva to "a temple at Cheetore ... ascribed there to the last of the Mori dynasty," and to caves at Ellora and Ajanta, he thus dated the building contemporary with the date of the inscription, around the year 700 A.D.[7] Thirty years later, however, in the 1876 edition of *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Fergusson redated the temple 100 years earlier—to "about the year 600"—on the grounds that recent discoveries had forced the date of the Ellora caves back by at least a century.[8]

After Fergusson, Alexander Cunningham visited Candrāvatī in 1864–65. Cunningham says that he was unable to find the inscription though he searched for it, "in vain." Nevertheless he then speculated that it had been taken from the temple and carted off by Tod; he attempted to support the dating this would give to the temple by referring to a pilgrims' record in the temple wall which, says he, was "in nail headed characters of the 7th or 8th century, exactly similar to those of the inscription which I extracted from the Sārnāth Tope near Benares."[9] But Cunningham had just assigned the "Sārnāth Tope" inscription to the sixth century (and not the seventh or eighth centuries) in the previous volume of the *Archaeological Survey of India Reports*,[10] and had also added a note to his text referring (Tod's) inscription to the Śaka era, or the ninth century A.D., "as the Saṁvat of Vikramāditya does not appear to have been in use at this early period."[11] So Cunningham's argument possesses internal contradictions, not to mention the fact that pilgrims' records can only confirm a date subsequent to a temple's construction.

In 1876, Georg Bühler published the stone inscription, correcting Tod's reading of year 748 to the year 746. Bühler was silent on the whereabouts of the stone slab, but did entitle his article "Two Inscriptions from Jhālrāpāṭhān,"[12] which is significant in view of the fact that when H.B.W. Garrick, Assistant to the Archaeological Survey, visited Candrāvatī in the 1880s, he neglected the inscription entirely. Regarding the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva, he was content to quote Fergusson's dating of 600 A.D.[13]

In 1904, Henry Cousens explored the site, and like Garrick before him, disregarded the inscription as evidence in the temple's dating, which he placed contemporary with, if not later than, the Kālikāmātā temple, also at the site.[14] Apparently, Cousens did not think that the inscription belonged to the temple; during his visit the stone slab itself was finally located in Jhālrāpāṭan, lying in the house of the "Divan Saheb" or Minister of the State, by D.R. Bhandarkar, who was touring with Cousens to work on epigraphic materials.

This information has been largely neglected, being obscurely contained within two lists of inscriptions in the *Western Circle Reports*. In the 1905–06 *Report*, the stone slab in question is entered as "2095–2096. Inscriptions with the same contents and engraved on both sides of the stone. Edited by Bühler, in *I.A.*, Vol. V, p. 181 ff." The previous year's list of "Inscriptions copied during 1904–05" records the findspot as Divan Saheb's house.[15] Apparently used as a repository for inscriptions, the stone record of the year 480 of Viśvavarma from Gaṅgadhār was also reported as being there at this time. And in this light, it is interesting to note that photographs of the Jhālrāpāṭan and Gaṅgadhār inscriptions were supplied to Bühler in 1876 and

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Fleet in 1883 by the same Colonel W. Muir, Political Agent at Kota.[16]

So it appears that nineteenth and twentieth century explorers of Candrāvatī may have been unable to locate the inscription because it was in Jhālrāpāṭan. Regardless of what may be gleaned from these records, in 1910, when James Burgess revised Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, he based his revisions on Cunningham. Replacing Fergusson's plan of the temple with Cunningham's version, Burgess also placed the temple in the ninth century, having reckoned the inscription's date in the Śaka era, only correcting Cunningham's 826 A.D. to 824 A.D. to conform to Bühler's rereading of the date as two years earlier than Tod's.[17] Burgess did not take cognizance of the fact that Fergusson and Cunningham were really not in agreement on the question of the temple's date and that in the 1880s Fleet's Mandasor inscription of Kumāragupta had removed Cunningham's reservations to refer Tod's inscription to the Vikrama era.[18]

Then in 1927, more than twenty years after Bhandarkar located the inscription in Jhālrāpāṭan, an extremely brief note by one S. Chern was published announcing the discovery of the same inscription "by the Curator, Darbar Archaeological Museum, in the temple of Chandramauli Mahādeva, on the bank of the river Chandrabhaga, Jhālrāpāṭan in the year 1915 .... This temple now bears the name of Shitleshwar Mahādēva."[19] The reliability of this account is highly suspect in view of the fact that Bhandarkar had already published his discovery of the inscription eight years prior to the time that S. Chern claims it was found in the temple.

It should be clear from the above that since no physical evidence of any kind links this dated inscription with the Śītaleśvara temple, it should not be considered a monument firmly dated by inscription. However, another issue to be considered is that none of the early scholars perceived the differences in style that separate in date the early *mūlaprāsāda* and *mukhamaṇḍapa* from the much later pillared *maṇḍapa*.[20] As the study of Indian art has advanced in the last twenty years, some parts of the temple have come to be recognized as being original and considerably earlier than the later pillared hall and other additions. Perhaps judging the original temple to fall somewhere in the "post-Gupta" period, and because one is always in search of dated monuments to help reconstruct the history of Indian art, modern scholars have linked the inscription with the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva, choosing to take the chance that it, in fact, refers to this temple.[21]

It is just possible that the inscription might refer to the Śītaleśvara temple, but it is equally possible that the linkage is inappropriate. This last-noticed possibility cannot be dismissed as Candrāvatī possesses remains attesting to a lengthy history. The most sound procedure would be to reject the categorical association of the inscription with the temple, which could well be erroneous and could confuse rather than clarify issues in the study of this period. The inscription may be kept in mind as evidence that might eventually be accepted or completely rejected as knowledge advances, and one should proceed thus heeding Fergusson and determining the chronology by comparative studies.[22]

NOTES

1. Firmly dated in the seventh century are two bronze Jinas from Vasantgaḍh. See U.P. Shah, "Bronze Hoard from Vasantgaḍh," *Lalit Kalā*, Vol. 1–2 (April 1955-March 1956), pp. 50–51. Other monuments that have been dated in the seventh century on the basis of inscriptions are: the Lakṣmaṇa temple at Sirpur (Raipur District, M.P.), the octagonal temple on Muṇḍeśvarī hill (Rohtas District, Bihār), the Rāmachandrajī temple at Kusmā (Śirohī District, Rājasthān) and the Kālikāmātā temple at Chitorgaḍh (Chitor District, Rājasthān). Among scholarly works, see: (Sirpur) K. Deva, "Lakshmana Temple at Sirpur," *Journal of the Madhya Pradesh Itihasa Parishad*, Vol. 2 (1960), pp. 35–43; D. Barrett and M.G. Dikshit, *Mukhalingam Temples and Sirpur and Rajim Temples*, Bombay 1960; and D.M. Stadtner, *Sirpur to Rajim: The Art of Kosala During the Seventh Century*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkely 1976, pp. 35–37; (Muṇḍeśvarī) *A.S.I.A.R.*, 1902–03, pp. 42–43; R.D. Banerji, "The Mundesvari Inscription of Udayasena. The (Harsha) Year 30," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–08), pp. 289–290; N.G. Majum-

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dar, "The Mundesvari Inscription of the Time of Udayasena: The Year 30," *I.A.*, Vol. XLIX (February 1920), pp. 21–29; K.C. Panigrahi, "Temple of Mundesvari in Shahbad," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. 49, Nos. 1–2 (March-June 1958), pp. 14–21; D.R. Patil, *Antiquarian Remains in Bihar*, Patna 1963, pp. 291–293; and F.M. Asher, *The Sixth- Through Eighth-Century Sculptures of Bihar*, PhD. dissertation, the University of Chicago 1971; (Kusumā) M.W. Meister, "Detective Archaeology: A preliminary report on the Śiva temple at Kusumā." *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. 27 (1973–74), pp. 76–90 and "A Field Report on Temples at Kusumā," *Archives of Asian Art,* Vol. 29 (1975-76), pp. 23–46; and (Chitorgadh *A.S.I.A.R. 1934-35*, pp. 56–57; Meister, *Form in the North Indian Temple: A Field Survey*, Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University 1974, p. 179, note 135 and Meister "Detective Archaeology," note 15.

2. J. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajast'han* (original ed., 1829–1832), reprint, New Delhi 1971, Vol. I., p. 624; Vol. II, p. 586; J. Fergusson, *Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*, London 1848, p. 33; A. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. II, *1864–65*, p. 264. See also *Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series, Rājputānā* (Maj. K.D. Erskine, compiler), Calcutta 1908, pp. 390, 396–398; and *Rajasthan District Gazetteers. Jhalawar*, Jaipur 1964, pp. 281–285.

3. K. Deva, "Extensions of Gupta Art: Art and Architecture of the Pratīhāra Age," in M. Chandra (ed.), *Seminar on Indian Art History 1962*, New Delhi, p. 96; and K. Deva, *Temples of North India*, New Delhi, 1969, p. 28. For ground plan, see: M.W. Meister, *Form in the North Indian Temple*, Pl. 194, and Meister, "Forest and Cave: Temples at Candrabhāgā and Kansuān," *Archives of Asian Art,* Vol. XXXIV(1981), Figs. 7 and 8.

4. G. Bühler, "Two inscriptions from Jhālrāpāṭan," *I.A.*, Vol. V (1876), pp. 180–183.

5. This is mentioned in view of Cunningham's report that an inscription measuring 4′5″×2′1″ was "said to have been removed by some *Sahib"* from a framed recess in the *antarāla* (Report II, p. 266).

6. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities*, Vol. II, pp. 587–588.

7. Fergusson, *Picturesque Illustrations*, pp. 33–34.

8. J. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, London 1876, pp. 448–449.

9. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. II, pp. 265–267, may have been following up Fergusson's remark (*Picturesque Illustrations,* p. 33) that

> though there are numbers of inscriptions on its walls, none of these appear to me to be integral, or forming a part of the original design, but are merely names of visitors or donors to the temple, added afterwards ... though it is probable that the oldest of the inscriptions may not be far from the date of the erection.

10. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. I (1862–65), p. 111.

11. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 266.

12. Bühler, "Two Inscriptions," pp. 180–183.

13. H.B.W. Garrick, in *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII (1883–84), p. 129.

14. *Progress Report, Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle 1904–05*, pp. 31–32.

15. *Western Circle Report 1905–06*, p. 56; and 1904-05, p. 9.

16. Photozincographs of the inscriptions were prepared by James Burgess, then editor of *The Indian Antiquary*, from the photographs supplied by Colonel Muir. *Cf.* Bühler, "Two inscriptions from Jhālrāpāṭhān," p. 180, note*. The Gaṅgdhār inscription was still *in situ* in 1883. *Cf.* J.F. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, Calcutta 1888, p. 72.

17. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (J. Burgess, ed.) London 1910, Vol. II, pp. 132–133. William Crooke evidently cites Burgess' reference to the Śaka era in his edition of Tod, *Annals and Antiquities*, London 1920, Vol. 3, p. 1788.

18. The era in which Tod's inscription is dated is not named. Bühler, "Two Inscriptions from Jhālrāpāṭhān," pp. 180–182, felt that "Samvat 746 *may*, as Tod concluded, have to be referred to the Vikrama era of 56–7 B.C., and correspond to 689–90 A.D. But there is no reason to prevent anyone from referring the date to the Śaka or Gupta eras .... On the whole they (the characters) show the Gupta type." We may infer from this that he favored the Vikrama era, which is the earliest of these and which would give a date closest to the Gupta period. Concurrent with this, Cunningham (*A.S.R.*, Vol. X, p. 34) had taken the Mālava era of the Gyārāspur inscription of 936 to be the same as the era of Vikramāditya. A decade later Fleet established that the Mālava era must be referred to the Vikrama era (Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, pp. 66–68). Thus D.R. Bhandarkar "A List of the Inscriptions of Northern India," *E.I.*, Vol. XIX (1927–1928), p. 4, No. 14, dates it in the Vikrama era.

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19. S. Chern, "Discovery of an Ancient Inscription in the Jhalawar State," *I.A.*, Vol. XLVI (1927), p. 213. Chern's note also seems to confuse certain pieces of information. "Candramauli" is an epithet of Śiva extracted from verse 8 of the inscription (candramaule=r=bhavanaṁ), the temple of he who wears the moon in his crest, (i.e., Śiva). (*Cf.* Bühler, "Two Inscriptions," pp. 181–182). Whether or not the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva was ever called by that name, is not known and there is no reason to assume so. Fergusson (*Picturesque Illustrations,* p. 33) referred to it as the "Temple at Chandravati," noting that the local inhabitants "do not ascribe its erection to any name I could identify." Cunningham (*A.S.R.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXVI) called it "Temple of Mahādeva." Garrick (in *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 126) first uses the name "Sitaleswar Mahādeva." The original dedication of the temple is also somewhat problematic. Fergusson (*Picturesque Illustrations*, p. 34) first pointed out the difficulties of discerning its dedication, though at a time when the "vimana," evidently, was not sufficiently distinct, ultimately concluding, however, that it was Vaiṣṇava from its age and the images scattered round. Cunningham (*A.S.R.*, Vol. II, p. 266) concurred, pointing to an image he understood as Viṣṇugadādhara, but which is really an image of Lakulīśa on an added band of the doorframe. Cousens (*Western Circle Report 1904-05*, p. 31), who correctly identified Lakulīśa, argued instead for the original Śaiva dedication of the temple, not noting that the two inner bands on which this image appears are not contemporary with the early doorframe. In Cunningham's time, niches on the exterior of the temple contained both Viṣṇu and Śiva images including Mahiṣāsuramardinī in a niche on the temple's north wall; the sanctum housed a *liṅga*. Cousens (*ibid.*) much later noted Mahiṣāsuramardinī and Ardhanārī — "the last one being in a niche in the original wall, now hidden from sight behind the masonry of the added hall on the north side." Since none survive there, one cannot tell whether any originally belonged to the temple.

20. In the 1840s, Fergusson reported that the "vimana" was "completely ruined." Perhaps the superstructure had collapsed surrounding the sanctum with rubble both inside and out as shown in his plan (Fergusson, *Picturesque Illustrations*, p. 34). In the 1860s, Cunningham (*A.S.R.*, Vol. II, Pl. LXXVI) drew a plan with definitive base-lines, though his plan is inaccurate (*cf.* note 3). He may have been guessing what was underneath the rubble or merely careless or forgetful when making the drawing. Neither Fergusson nor Cunningham noticed a difference in style between the early and later parts of the temple. Fergusson's report that the sanctum was "ruined" seems to have had a lasting effect, however; in the 1880s Garrick (*A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 126–127) reported that only the *maṇḍapa* was intact and datable early, while the sanctum had been

> entirely demolished and since rudely rebuilt with mortar; fragmentary figure sculptures, ornate carvings, and even entire pillars from the same building or from others ... in all quite at random and without arrangement.

Cousens too (*Western Circle Report 1904-05*, p. 31) thought that

> the only original parts of the building are the pillars of the porch or hall, ... and the basement mouldings, and perhaps, some parts of the lower portion of the shrine walls.

21. Krishna Deva seems to have been the first to note the stylistic differences between the early and later parts of the temple. *Cf.*: Deva, "Extensions of Gupta Art," p. 96; Deva, *Temples of North India*, p. 28; M.A. Dhaky, "Genesis and Development of Māru-Gurjara Temple Architecture," in P. Chandra (ed.), *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, New Delhi 1975, p. 121; Meister, "Forest and Cave." P. Chandra, *Stone Sculptures in the Allahabad Museum*, Poona, no date, pp. 24–25, accepts the date of A.D. 689/90 for the temple, but notes that it is not securely dated.

22. A stylistic argument for a dating early in the seventh century was made by me in a paper read at the American Committee for South Asian Art panel in Los Angeles on March 31, 1979.

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20

Historiography of Temples on the Candrabhāgā, Reconsidered

MICHAEL W. MEISTER

WITH REFERENCE TO Carol Lin-Bodien's paper on the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva temple at Candrāvatī in this volume, I feel it important to point out some corrections before, in Pramod Chandra's words, "hope too quickly turns to certainty." Carol Lin-Bodien offers two points: that Candrāvatī and Jhālrāpāṭan are separate sites, and that the inscription of 689 A.D. referred to by Tod in 1831 and published by Bühler in 1876 was discovered by Bhandarkar in 1904 in the "Diwan Sahib's" house in Jhālrāpāṭan, not at the site of "Candrāvatī."[1]

Tod, Cunningham, and Bhandarkar, however, on the whole have all considered Jhālrāpāṭan (Carol Lin-Bodien's "new" town) and Candrāvatī (the "old" town) as interchangeable, and the ruins on the Candrabhāgā as associated with both. Cunningham, following a formula in his reports whereby he lists both ancient and modern names ("Taxila, or Takṣaśilā"), lists (II, p. 263 ff.) the ruins on the Candrabhāgā under "Jhalrapatan, or Chandravati." Tod records the new town built from the ruins of the old; Bhandarkar, from November 25th through 3rd December, 1904, as recorded in his diary, was "working upon the old temples at Jhalrapatan"; and in his list of inscriptions, he lists both those collected from the house of the Diwan Sahib and those from the Candrabhāgā temples as from "Jhālrāpāṭan." The ruins are one mile from the current city gate, and seem to me always to have been part of a *tīrtha* outside the ancient city.[2] The *Imperial Gazetteer*, on which Ms. Lin-Bodien bases her claim that the "old" town was destroyed by Aurangzeb, records the building of the present Jhālrāpāṭan in 1796 by Zalim Singh "just to the north of these remains" but continues that the new town included "within its limits the temple of Sāt Saheli ... and a Jain temple which formerly belonged to the old city" (Vol. XIV, Oxford 1908, pp. 123–124). These temples are dated in the eleventh century (the Jain temple by its image installed in V.S. 1145/A.D. 1088) and have not been seriously desecrated. Ms. Lin-Bodien rather quickly accepts the description of Cunningham that the ruins of Candrāvatī reflect hundreds of temples, though the "108" temples attributed to this Candrāvatī are attributed to Ābu-Candrāvatī as well (*see* R.K. Sharma, ed., *Art of the Paramāras of Mālwa*, Delhi 1979, p. 15). The *Imperial Gazetteer* reports of "Jhalrapatan" (not of "Candravati", p. 123) that:

> several modes of deriving the name are current. Some say the word means the "city of bells," and that the old town was so called because it contained 108 temples with bells; others that it is the "city" (*pātan*) of "springs" (*jhālra*), the latter abounding in the rivulet above mentioned; while others again say that the word *jhālra* refers to the Rājput clan (*Jhāla*).
>
> Mahārāja Raṇa Bhawani Singh ruled the newly

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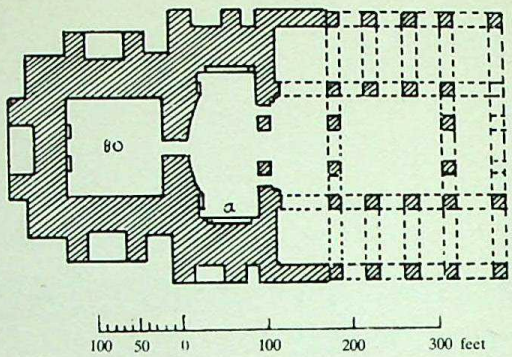
separated state of Jhalawar from 1899 to his death in 1929. The Diwan Saheb in whose house Bhandarkar saw the 689 A.D. inscription was most probably Shri Parmanand Chaturvedi, who, with the Rāj Rāṇa, completed the Harish Chandra library in the *new* town of Jhalawar four miles away in 1911. The Archaeological Museum, a few yards from the library and in front of the Collectorate, "was established during the time of Maharaja Rana Bhawani Singh [on June 1, 1915]. The first curator was Pt. Gopal Lal Vyas, who carried out an extensive survey of the State and stocked the museum with a varied and valuable collection," including seven inscriptions (*Rajasthan District Gazetteer: Jhalawar*, Jaipur 1964, pp. 258, 288, 291). Ms. Lin-Bodien has herself pointed out that Capt. W. Muir of Deoli, who had provided Bühler with photographs of the V.S. 746 inscription "taken for him by a local photographer" (*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1876, p. 180) also provided photographs of the Gaṅgādhar inscription, which Bhandarkar had also found collected in the Diwan Saheb's house in 1904, to Fleet for the *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III (1888).

It seems clear that the inscriptions and other antiquities collected in the "Diwan Sahib's" house in 1904 were moved to the Archaeological Museum in Jhalawar by its first curator, Gopal Lal Vyas, by 1915. S. Chern's report of 1927 (*I.A.*, Vol. LVI, p. 213) that the inscription had been found by Vyas in the temple of "Shitleshwar Mahādēva" in "the year 1915," while inaccurate in this detail, remains important in that it would seem to record Vyas's understanding of the inscription's find-spot, a tradition passed down to Shri Govardhanlal Vyas, in charge of the Jhalawar Museum during my two visits in 1969 and 1972. Such an opinion presumably reflects the best informed local opinion early in the twentieth century, a local tradition now formally recorded in the *Rajasthan District Gazetteer: Jhalawar* (Jaipur 1964, p. 282) which reports that "the largest and earliest of these are the temples of Chandramauli. It is named as such in an inscription dated V.S. 746 (689 A.D.) of Raja Durggana [sic] found at this place .... The inscription can be seen at the Jhalawar Museum."

None of this confirms where the inscription was located early in the nineteenth century; it does perhaps indicate what the Diwan and Gopal Lal Vyas thought was the source. Ms. Lin-Bodien ignores (or allows Cunningham himself to refute) the local tradition recorded by Cunningham in 1864 that:



a. Position of Removed Inscription.

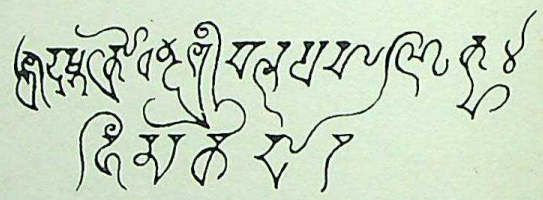


Figure. 1. Cunningham's plan of the Śītaleśvara Mahādeva temple showing the "position of removed inscription," and the inscription discovered by Cunningham on the sanctum wall (after Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey of India, Reports*, Vol. II, Plate LXXVI).

"beyond this is an antechamber, or *antarāla*, which once contained an inscription in a framed recess on the left hand, four feet five inches long by two feet one inch broad, which is said to have been removed by some *Sahib.*" Cunningham goes on to write: "as the inscription is not mentioned by Tod, who was the first European to visit this shrine, the Brahman's story of its removal is certainly untrue" (*A.S.R.*, Vol. II, 1862–65 [1872], p. 266). Only then does he accuse Tod himself of carrying off the inscription.

I vote for the Brahman. It seems to me about time that credence is given to what is said by the Indians living near the Candrabhāgā site rather than playing games with haphazard European reports. Ms. Lin-Bodien also doubts an inscription stone with a second inscription on its back ever could have stood in a temple niche. The inscription now in the Jhalawar Museum, however, is appropriate in size, and records a temple foundation. I would not find it surprising if the scribe turned over his stone to correct or revise the inscription he had first begun.[3]

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Ms. Lin-Bodien criticizes Cunningham for relating the "7th" century graffiti he found inscribed on the Śitaleśvara temple itself to a "6th" century inscription he had recently found from the Dhāmek *stūpa* at Sārnāth. Cunningham does publish the "Pilgrim's inscription," however (Figure 1), which is written in an informal ornate script of possibly *c.* 700 A.D., not unlike graffiti on the moldings of the Kālikā temple at Chittor. The 689 A.D. inscription is in a somewhat more formal ornate script, still comparable to the slightly later graffiti recorded by Cunningham. I must thank Richard Salomon and M.A. Dhaky, for confirming this view.

There can be no certainty in such uncertain speculations; yet methodology need be perfected if circumstantial argument is used as substitute for evidence.

NOTES

1. My arguments concerning the Śitaleśvara temple are contained in an article, "Forest and Cave: Temples at Chandrabhāgā and Kansuāñ," *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. XXXIV (1981), pp. 56–73.

2. The *Rajasthan District Gazetteer: Jhalawar*, Jaipur 1964, p. 8, records that "on the occasion of *Kartik Purnima* thousands of people assemble to bathe in [the Chandrabhāgā's] waters at the sacred spot of Chandravati near Jhalrapatan town."

3. Carol Lin-Bodien confuses dimensions recorded by Cunningham for the *niche* (134 cm by 63.5 cm) with those of the inscription itself. The inscription now preserved in the Jhalawar museum measures 55.86 cm by 43.16 cm, according to the museum's caretaker (I thank Mrs. Chandramani Singh, Registrar, Maharaja Sawai Man Singh Museum, Jaipur, for obtaining this information for me). No one has argued that the inscription ever was mounted in this niche, but only stored there.

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Muṇḍeśvarī Temple, Ramgarh

KRISHNA DEVA

THE MUNDEŚVARĪ TEMPLE is built atop a hill 182 m 86 cm high, situated close to Rāmgarh village, which is about twelve kilometers southwest of the town of Bhabua in District Rohtas of Bihar State.

The hill has fairly steep ascent towards the base and the top, with a relatively easy gradient in the middle, where three natural ledges of the hill-contour have been leveled for siting smaller shrines of which traces comprising a few brickbats or brick courses are seen on the surface. The steep rocky ascent towards the summit has been utilized for engraving graffiti, including personal names, by ancient pilgrims in the *śaṅkhalipi* and the *siddhamātṛkā* script of the seventh century A.D. One of the rocks was also carved with a colossal figure of six-armed Bhairava accompanied by his dog *vāhana* in the early medieval style. Nearby are placed two loose images, a well-preserved seated Gaṇeśa and a fragmentary bust of goddess, both dating from around the early seventh century A.D., which seem originally to have belonged to the temple. Another image of a seated Gaṇeśa, in similar style but slightly abraded, also lies along the approach path, not far from the last two.

The temple (Plate 138) is remarkable for its well-articulated octagonal plan and its bold masonry and crisp carving. According to its foundation inscription the temple was built in the reign of Mahāsāmanta Mahāpratīhāra Mahārāja Udayasena by Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Gomibhaṭa after having propitiated Kulapati Bhāgudalana. The inscription is dated in year 30 of an unspecified era which, if referred to the Harṣa era, yields 636 A.D. as the foundation date for the temple.

The temple faces south, the direction from which the hill is ascended, and comprises an octagonal sanctum (external diameter 12 m 19 cm; internal 6 m 9 cm) and a rectangular pillared *maṇḍapa* of which only traces have survived. The temple is pierced by four doorways at cardinal points (Plate 139).

The sketch-plan published by R.N. Martin,[1] which provides the earliest notice of the temple, shows a pillared *maṇḍapa* in front of the southern doorway with twelve pillars (strictly eight pillars and four pilasters). The Archaeological Survey of India, too, has marked positions at the site of twelve pillars. Among the architectural members lying loose around the temple occur fragments of four pillars, the tallest being about 3 m 65 cm high. These are all plain pillars of the Rucaka type. Two of them are carved with a plain semicircular medallion and short octagonal and sixteen-sided sections on the *bharaṇa*.

The interior of the temple shows four central pillars and four pairs of pilasters, each pair flanking the passage leading from one of the four doorways to the sanctum. The pillars are all plain and have a square *kumbhikā* and *bharaṇa* and an octagonal shaft with a short sixteen-sided section below the *bharaṇa* and a cruciform *śīrṣaka* of a plain curved profile. The pilasters are of the Rucaka type with a plain half medallion, a short octagonal section and a plain *ghaṭapallava* marking the *bharaṇa*.

A *pīṭhikā* is placed centrally in the shrine for sup-

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porting a *caturmukha Śivaliṅga* which occupies the position of *mūlanāyaka*. Consistently with the present name of the temple "Muṇḍeśvarī," main worship, however, is offered to a medieval image of an eight-armed goddess riding a bull or a buffalo (snout broken), which curiously is kept in the eastern passage with its anciently blocked door entrance. The shrine also has two large stone-chests and a few inconsequential images and image fragments representing Śiva, Ardhanārīśvara, Durgā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Agni and Gaṇeśa, of dates ranging from the seventh to tenth centuries A.D.

A stone inscription[2] of 18 lines, broken in two parts, was discovered while clearing the debris around the temple. One part was discovered in 1892 and the other in 1903; when the two parts were joined together in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, where they are deposited, they were found to be parts of the same inscription with some letters abraded or missing along the line of cleavage. The inscription bears, according to G.S. Gai,[3] closest palaeographical affinities to the Barābar cave inscriptions of the Maukharis, who belong to about the later half of the sixth century A.D. But the only known era to which the year 30 of the inscription could be referred with reasonable approximation is the Harṣa era of 606 A.D., which yields 636 A.D. as the foundation date of the temple. Significantly, the temple with its figures and decorative ornaments is stylistically assignable to the same period, i.e. the early seventh century.

According to the inscription there was a temple of Viṣṇu or Sūryanārāyaṇa (*Nārāyaṇa-devakula*) called *Maṇḍaleśvarasvāmin*, which was an old establishment with its management committee (*devanikāya*) and its store-room (*koṣṭhikā*). To that temple was appended a Śiva temple (with monastery?) called *Vinīteśvara-maṭha* to which the foundation inscription specifically refers. The inscription says that provision was made to supply two *prasthas* of rice and one *pala* of oil for lamp from the store-room of *Maṇḍaleśvarasvāmin* as daily offerings obviously to the newly established deity *Vinīteśvara*. It is stated further that fifty *dīnāras* were donated to the temple committee for providing an offering to the cow (*go-bali*), a garland, cooked rice and other articles.

It appears from the inscription that the temple of *Maṇḍaleśvarasvāmin* was the older shrine and to that was added the temple of Vinīteśvara Śiva. The hilltop has not space enough to accommodate two temples, unless it is assumed that the little shrine measuring about 2 m 43 cm square with a Śivaliṅga, immediately to the southwest of the main temple was the Vinīteśvara temple. But this shrine, besides being insignificant, is definitely a later votive shrine. That the temple continued under worship is also shown by later pilgrim records on the rocky ascent up the hill and by two such records engraved on the *vedībandha* of the temple in characters of the late seventh century, reading *Śrī-Paravala-gambhīra* and *Marucaṇḍa* (Plate 141). No independent image of Viṣṇu dating from the sixth-seventh centuries, worthy of being a *mūlanāyaka*, has so far been recovered from Muṇḍeśvarī. Images of Hari-hara and Sūrya from the site dating from early seventh century, however, are preserved in the Patna Museum. Of these, Hari-hara (Plate 140) is larger, measuring 1 m 42 cm high, and bears a short label *Vipaścitaḥ* in the same characters as the main inscription. The label means "of Vipaścit", or one who is learned, this being probably the name of the donor. The Patna Museum also has other images from this site: a seated Kārttikeya and a standing Kārttikeya, a standing Pārvatī, a pair of seated Mātṛkās (heads missing), and seated Agni and Kubera, the last represented with an enigmatic smile, wearing an outlandish dress. All these figures are stylistically of the early seventh century.

It will thus be seen that the majority of the figures from or associated with the Muṇḍeśvarī temple are Śaiva and pertain to the early seventh century. There is, therefore, some point in the observation of K.C. Panigrahi[4] that the temple may originally have been Vaiṣṇava[5] but became Śaiva during the early seventh century and remained so until the late medieval period when, with the popular upsurge of Śāktism, it was converted to Śākta worship. There is no inherent contradiction between the popular forms of Śaiva and Śākta worship and in the coexistence of Śiva and Śākti in the same shrine. Thus, while the position of *mūlanāyaka* is occupied by a *caturmukha Śivaliṅga*, the main worship is offered to a Devī. In sum, the Maṇḍaleśvarasvāmin yielded place to Maṇḍaleśvara (Śiva), who ultimately was eased out by Maṇḍaleśvarī, vulgarly known as Muṇḍeśvarī.

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NOTES

1. R.N. Martin, *Eastern India*, London 1838, Vol. I, Pl. V, p. 456.

2. R.D. Banerji, "Mundesvari Inscription of Udayasena (Harsha) Year 30," *E.I.*, Vol. IX, pp. 289–290; N.G. Majumdar, "The Mundesvari Inscription of the time of Udayasena," *I.A.*, Vol. XLIX (1920), pp 21–29.

3. In a personal communication to the author. See also G.S. Gai's paper in this volume.

4. K.C. Panigrahi, "Temple of Mundesvari in Shahabad," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XLIV (1958), pp. 14–21.

5. As the principal doorway shows two larger *pratīhāras* each one holding a lotus flower in one of the hands and two smaller *pratīhāras* on the top of the jamb, identifiable as Daṇḍī and Piṅgala, the temple appears originally to have been dedicated to Sūrya or Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa. Such an identification is not inconsistent with the name of the original deity as *Maṇḍaleśvarasvāmin* and of the temple as *Nārāyaṇa-devakula*. Among sculptures from this site are a Sūrya-maṇḍala and two incomplete pillars with *sarvatobhadrikā-pratimās*, one showing figures of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Pārvatī and Gaṇeśa and the other of Sūrya Harihara, Pārvatī and Śivaliṅga. It is not unlikely that these once occupied significant positions in the scheme of the original temple.

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The Muṇḍeśvarī Temple Inscription of the Year 30 and Its Bearing on the Temple

G.S. GAI

THE MUṆḌEŚVARĪ INSCRIPTION (Plate 142) was discovered, in two pieces, one at the end of the last and the other at the beginning of the present century, in the debris around the temple of Muṇḍeśvarī on a hill near the village of Ramgarh (Bhabhua sub-division of Rohtas District) in Bihar State. The two halves of the record were later pieced together with an iron band and kept in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. Due to the splitting in half of the record, some of the letters along the cleavage line were broken and lost. The inscription was first edited by R.D. Banerji in 1907–08[1] and was re-edited by N.G. Majumdar in 1920.[2]

The inscription is dated in the year 30 (expressed in words) of an unspecified era. Banerji referred it to the Harṣa era of 606 A.D. so that the date of the record would correspond to 636 A.D. In doing so, he stated that the characters of this inscription are similar to those of the Patiakella grant of Mahārāja Śivarāja dated in the year 283,[3] which is referred to the Gupta era by him and thus would correspond to 602 A.D. He also found similarity in the characters of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription with those in records from Nepal[4] dated in the years 34 and 39 and attributed to the Harṣa era of 606 A.D. Disagreeing with the views of Banerji, Majumdar stated that the characters of the Muṇḍeśvari inscription resemble those of the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta,[5] the Mehrauli pillar inscription of Candra[6] identified with Candragupta II, the Mathura inscription of Candragupta II[7] and the Barābar and Nāgārjunī cave inscriptions[8] of Maukhari Anantavarmā.[9] According to Majumdar, the date 30 of the Muṇḍeśvarī record should be referred to the Gupta era of 319/20 and thus would correspond to 348/49 A.D., i.e. to the early Gupta period.[10] D.R. Bhandarakar also referred the date of this record to the Gupta era.[11] K.C. Panigrahi seems to follow N.G. Majumdar and D.R. Bhandarkar in dating the record and observed that there is no reason to make the epigraph contemporary with the temple.[12] In his opinion, while the inscription belongs to the fourth century A.D., the present temple belongs to the seventh century A.D.; its existing sculptures and architecture would show that there were three periods of the religious history of the shrine.[13] He stated:

> Originally it was a Vaiṣṇava shrine with a Nārāyaṇa as the presiding deity, but in the seventh century A.D., the date of the temple, Śaivism appears to have superseded Vaiṣnavism and Vinītēśvara, originally a subsidiary deity, became the presiding deity of the place. In course of time Śaivism was however overshadowed by Śāktism and a Mahiṣamardinī known as Muṇḍeśvarī, became the presiding deity of the shrine.[14]

Now to examine the palaeography of the inscription in question. It is difficult to agree with Banerji when he states that the characters of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription are similar to those of the Patiakella plates

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of Śivarāja referred to 602 A.D. Though a few individual letters in these two records may look alike, the entire appearance and pattern of the script in them are dissimilar. Hence there seems no case for instituting a comparison between the two. Similarly, Majumdar's comparison of the script of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription with that of the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta and the Meharauli inscription of Candragupta II is not justified from the standpoint of the general appearance and pattern of the script of these records. While the letters *l* and *h* in the Allahabad and Meharauli inscriptions are of the so-called eastern variety of the Gupta script, they are of the western variety in the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription. Moreover, Majumdar's comparison of the characters of the Muṇḍeśvarī epigraph with those of the Allahabad and Meharauli inscription on the one hand and with the characters of the Barābar and Nāgārjunī cave inscriptions on the other is also not tenable, because, while the Gupta records belong to the fourth century A.D., the Maukhari inscriptions of Anantavarmā belong to the sixth century A.D. There is thus a difference of two hundred years, and the scripts of these two sets do not, in fact, resemble each other. From the standpoint of the general appearance and pattern of the script as well as from the point of view of the resemblance of individual letters, I am inclined to suggest that the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription is similar to the Barābar and Nāgārjunī hill cave inscriptions of the Maukhari king Anantavarmā, who is referred to the first half of the sixth century A.D. One may compare the individual letters *ṇ*, *l* and *y* of the Muṇḍeśvarī record with those in the Maukhari inscription and find that they resemble each other closely. Hence it would not be wrong to assign the Muṇḍeśvarī epigraph to the first half or even to the middle of the sixth century A.D.[15]

The purport of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription was also not clear to the earlier writers since the reading and interpretation of the passages in lines 3 to 7 are not free from doubt. Banerji reads this portion as follows:

> kulapati-Bhā[gu]dalanas=sa dēvanikāyam
> daṇḍa[nā]yaka-Gōmibhaṭēna prārtthayitvā
> mātāpittrōr=ātmanś=ca pu[ṇyā]bhivṛddhayē
> Vinītēśvara-maṭha-samāvēśaṁ maṭham=ētat=
> kāritakaṁ
> [Śrī]-Nārāyaṇa-devakulasya śrī-Maṇḍalēśvara-
> svāmi-[pādā]ya kōṣṭhikātaḥ....

He translates this as "*kulapati* Bhāgudalana, having applied to the Council of gods (? Brāhmaṇas) through the *daṇḍanāyaka* Gōmibhaṭa built this *maṭha* of the *dēvakula* Nārāyaṇa, to increase the merit of his father and mother and of his own self, near the temple of Vinītēśvara. For the lord Maṇḍalēśvara provision has been made ..."

Majumdar disagrees with this reading and interpretation. He seems to be right in reading *may =ētat=kāritakam* instead of *maṭham=ētat=kāritakam* read by Banerji. Similarly his reading *Maṇḍalēśvara-pādīya* instead of *-pādāya* seems to be correct. Majumdar translates the passage as follows:

> ... the establishment of the Vinītēśvara-maṭha has been made by me, the *daṇḍanāyaka* Gōmibhaṭa, after having propitiated the *kulapati* Bhāgudalana together with the temple committee (of this place) for the increase of the merit of (my) father, mother and myself. Provision has also been made .... from the store-room of śrī-Maṇḍalēśvara-svāmi-pāda of the temple of śrī-Nārāyaṇa.

It appears that the object of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription is to record the construction of the shrine of Vinīteśvara, which was included or incorporated (*samāveśam*) in the temple-complex of Nārāyaṇa and that provision was made for some services in that shrine from the store-room of the Maṇḍaleśvara-svāmī is the same as the temple of Nārāyaṇa mentioned earlier in the record, since the suffix *svāmin* attached to the temple indicates its Viṣṇuite character.[16] Thus the main temple originally was a Viṣṇuite one with a shrine for Vinīteśvara attached to it, though few Vaiṣṇava figures are found there at present. The *caturmukha* Śivaliṅga and the Mahiṣamardinī which are found there seem to have been added later, when the temple became predominently Śaiva, possibly sometime in the late seventh century A.D. Only thus can one explain the architectural and sculptural remains of the temple that largely belong to the seventh century A.D., though there are some indications of earlier remains also, and this is attested by the existence of the stone inscription there.

I disagree with Panigrahi, who reads the name of the *Kulapati* as Bhānubhaṭa. The reading of Banerji, namely, Bhā[gu]dalana is correct. I also feel that the modern name "Muṇḍeśvarī has to be derived from the shrine's original appellation "Maṇḍaleśvara" and not from the demon Muṇḍa.

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NOTES

1. R.D. Banerji, "Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription of Udayasena [Harṣa] Year 30," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–08), pp. 289–90.

2. N.G. Majumdar, "The Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription of the Time of Udayasena: The Year 30," *I.A.*, Vol. XLIX (1920), pp. 21–29.

3. Banerji, "Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription," p. 285.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

5. J.F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, reprint ed., Varanasi 1963, Plate I.

6. *Ibid.*, Plate XXI–A.

7. *Ibid.*, Plate III–a.

8. *Ibid.*, Plates XXX–B, XXXI–A and XXXI–B.

9. Majumdar, "The Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription," p. 22.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

11. D.R. Bhandarkar, *List of the Inscriptions of Northern India,* No. 1257.

12. K.C. Panigrahi, "Temple of Muṇḍeśvarī in Shahabad," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XLIV (1958), pp. 15–17. (Incidentally, Panigrahi's observation that Bhandarkar's remarks rather indicate that he considers the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription even earlier than the fourth century A.D. (*ibid.*, p. 15) is erroneous in view of the fact that the remarks of Bhandarkar (*List*, p. 170 and *infra*, 4) relate to the Bodh-Gayā inscription of Trikamala and not to the Muṇḍeśvarī record.)

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. The characters of the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription appear to be earlier than those of the Nalanda stone inscription (Hiranand Sastri, "Nalanda Stone Inscription of the reign of Yasovarmmadeva," *E.I.*, Vol. XX (1929–30), pp. 37–46 and plate) of Yaśovarmadeva and to the graffiti found in Temple 2 there.

16. The expression *Virajoguhā-svāmin*, mentioned in the Mandār Hill Inscription, (D.C. Sircar, "Inscriptions from Mandar Hill," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVI (1965–66), p. 305) is applied to the Narasiṁha in the cave.

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23

Eastern Indian Inscriptions: The Problem of Era

FREDERICK M. ASHER

FOUND IN THE debris of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple was an inscription dated to the year 30 of an unspecified era during the reign of an otherwise unknown Mahārāja Udayasena.[1] The purpose of the inscription has never been fully understood, although elsewhere in this volume the most likely explanation of the inscription's meaning is suggested.[2] The inscription evidently does not record the dedication of the remarkable octagonal temple preserved on Muṇḍeśvarī Hill, but still its date has been a matter of considerable interest and controversy.

Thus far, the year 30 in the inscription has been assigned either to the Harṣa era, giving a date of 636 A.D.,[3] or to the Gupta era, giving a date of 350 A.D.[4] The former view, it seems, is suggested in large measure by the style of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple, which appears to date during the early seventh century; the latter view is supported by the palaeography of the inscription itself. Since the inscription does not record the establishment of the surviving temple, it might appear that the weight of evidence favors assigning the year 30 to the Gupta era. That, however, is by no means certain.

A second inscription dated in the same year poses much the same problems with regard to the interpretation of the date. This record of the year 30 is inscribed above the entrance to the cave enshrining an effaced image of Narasiṁha on Mandār Hill, about 30 miles south of Bhāgalpur.[5] No king is mentioned in this inscription—only the year 30. Since the inscription's palaeographic style has been dated to the fourth or fifth century, the year 30 has been assigned to the Gupta era.[6]

About 350 A.D., the Guptas were ruling the area in which both Muṇḍeśvarī Hill and Mandār Hill were located, but that alone does not prove that the year 30 of these two inscriptions should be assigned to the Gupta era. Doing so would place them a full generation before the earliest known inscription that bears an unquestionable Gupta-era date, the Mathura inscription of the Gupta year 61 written during the reign of Candragupta II.[7] Moreover, just because the Gupta era was reckoned from 320 A.D., there is no reason to suppose that it was used soon after its commencement point. It is especially noteworthy that neither the Muṇḍeśvarī nor Mandār Hill inscription mentions a Gupta king: One might not expect a Gupta monarch to be identified in an inscription written at a time when the Gupta era was so widely known that the point of reference need not be stated. But during the early years of Gupta rule, one should expect a Gupta monarch's name to appear if the Gupta era is intended.

There is still another reason, a more basic one, for questioning whether the Gupta era is intended in these two inscriptions, and it has far-reaching implications for the interpretation of dates on a great many eastern Indian shrines and images. In the ancient written documents of eastern India, time was almost invariably marked according to the regnal year of a current monarch, not according to a continuous chronological system as favored in most other parts of India. This is a tradition of very long standing, persisting into the tenth century and later.

The antiquity of this tradition extends at least to the

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earliest surviving dated inscriptions, the Aśokan edicts, proclaimed in particular regnal years of the monarch. This Magadhan fashion of reckoning time stands in marked contrast to the Kuṣāṇa era, widely used in Uttar Pradesh but not in eastern India. In this system, the reigning monarch's name may be mentioned, although the numbering is consecutive and does not start again with the numeral one when a new king succeeds to the throne. The same is true of the Śaka era, used for reckoning time in western India and the Deccan. In short, consecutive systems of marking time persist in most parts of India, whereas regnal-year systems are favored in eastern India.

Even when eastern India was not ruled by an indigenous house but fell under the same dynastic authority as other parts of northern India, regnal year dating systems continued to be favored over such widely accepted continuous eras as the Gupta era. Thus Skandagupta's Bihar Sharif pillar inscription records no Gupta era date.[8] The Nalanda and Gaya inscriptions, purportedly of Samudragupta's time, are both probably spurious; but it seems noteworthy that the seventh- or eighth-century counterfeiters of these inscriptions did not even try to provide a date that could conceivably be construed as belonging to the Gupta era but rather followed local tradition and used regnal years, 5 in the case of the Nalanda inscription and 9 in the case of the Gaya inscription.[9]

Only on copper-plate inscriptions is the Gupta era—or any continuous era, for that matter—used in eastern India. Very few copperplate charters are known from Magadha, but one from Nandanpur in Monghyr District is dated in the year 169, during the reign of Budhagupta;[10] that year must be referred to the Gupta era. Another, from Amauna in Gaya District, mentions no king but is dated in the year 232,[11] and that, too, doubtless represents a continuous era, most likely the Gupta era. From Bengal, many more copper-plate land-grants are known, one dated to the year 113, when, according to the inscription, Kumāragupta I was ruling;[12] another inscription from Bengal mentioning this same monarch dates to the year 124;[13] three inscriptions found in Bengal date to the year 128, one of them identifying Kumāragupta as the king;[14] and several others inscribed with Gupta-era dates were issued subsequently. The era was thus used in eastern India, but significantly it was reserved almost exclusively for copper-plate inscriptions recording land transfers. The legal status of those inscriptions, then, must explain the use of the prevailing imperial power's era, otherwise not favored in eastern India.

Among the inscriptions of eastern India carved on stone, principally dedicatory inscriptions, only two probably use the Gupta era, and both, it is noteworthy, were found at Bodhgaya. Of these, there can be no doubt that the date of one refers to a continuous era, not regnal years. This is Mahānāman's beautiful dedication of a "Mansion for the Teacher" at Bodhgaya in the year 269.[15] But Mahānāman, like almost all others who left inscriptions at Bodhgaya, was not a Magadhan, likely to use whatever local system of reckoning time was in vogue; he was from Sri Lanka. Hence, his use of the Gupta era may result from his encounter with it at one of the other sacred Buddhist sites. Curiously, the pilgrims to Bodhgaya who left written records took pains to point out their place of origin, as if to stress that they are not local, quite unlike those who left records at Sarnath.[16] Alternatively, and perhaps more likely, the use of the Gupta era results from the practice of scribes at Bodhgaya who, like at least some of the artists working there, might have come from a place like Mathura, where the Gupta era was in common use.

The only other eastern Indian stone record whose date may be referred to the Gupta era also comes from Bodhgaya. This is carved on the seated Buddha found very close to the Mahābodhi temple; on its pedestal is an inscription incised in the year 64.[17] I would feel a great deal more confident that the Gupta era were intended in an inscription dated so early, that is, when the use of the Gupta era was in its infancy, if it mentioned a Gupta monarch. Surely, though, the year 64 is not the regnal year of the Maharaja Trikamala, the monarch identified in the inscription. Since the style of the image conforms with expectations for an early Gupta date, the year likely refers to the Gupta era, and so an explanation should be sought for its use in the heart of Magadha. The inscription is so effaced that one cannot tell whether the patron, Siharatha, discloses his place of origin as other pilgrims to Bodhgaya generally do. But I would not be the least surprised if he had come from Mathura, perhaps bringing with him artists and scribe. The style of the sculpture bears such striking resemblance to the Mathura style that the image has been mistaken for an import to Bodhgaya.[18] Moreover, it is only at Mathura that there is a comparably early Gupta era record, that is, the relief *triśūla* from Raṅgeśvara bearing the record that two Śiva *liṅgas* were installed by Uditācārya in the Gupta year 61.[19] Following this, the next known inscription to use the Gupta era—that is, beside its likely use on the Bodhgaya image—is the Udayagiri inscription of the Gupta year 82, more than 20 years later.

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In eastern India after the Gupta period, continuous time eras were similarly avoided. The inscriptions of the later Guptas, that is, of Ādityasena and Jīvitagupta, provide only the ruling monarch's name, not even a regnal year, much less the year in a continuous dating system. But at this very time, Śaka-era inscriptions were widely used in the Deccan, for example by the early Calukyas, and in a great many places in western, central and northern India.[20] The Kalacuri-Cedi era was established and widely used.[21] And the long-standing Vikrama era continued to be used at this time in most parts of northern India.[22] But none of these continuous eras was adopted in eastern India. Even when the Pālas came to dominate the region, time was marked according to the regnal years of each monarch, not consecutively as if there were a Pāla era, nor according to any of the more widely adopted consecutive systems used by the great ruling houses contemporary with the Pālas. Pratīhāra inscriptions, for example, are almost invariably dated in either Vikrama or Śaka *saṁvat*.[23] Among Pratīhāra inscriptions, it is the exceptions to this that are notable, namely the inscriptions of Mahendrapāla found in eastern India, not in the Pratīhāra heartland. This includes the Pāhārpur inscription of his fifth year[24] and the Gunerīya image inscriptions of his ninth year.[25] In other words, the indigenous eastern Indian method of reckoning time was followed for these Pratīhāra inscriptions.

Only very late was one of the continuous dating systems adopted in eastern India, and even then it by no means altogether replaced the old regnal-year system. The earliest use of a continuous dating system there is a Vikrama-era image inscription from Tetrāwāṅ, now lost but said to be dated in *saṁvat* 892, that is, A.D. 834.[26] The reading of the year, however, is by no means certain; so perhaps more conclusive is the next eastern Indian Vikrama *saṁvat* inscription, dated in the year 955 or A.D. 897. This is the Dighwā Dubaoli record issued not by an indigenous monarch but by the Pratīhāra king Mahendrapāla and, in any event, from Kanauj.[27] So, too, many of the subsequent Vikrama-era inscriptions and the few Śaka-era inscriptions from eastern India were issued by monarchs not indigenous to the region, the Gahadvalas for example.[28]

Hence my contention appears to stand: Throughout its history, at least until the tenth century, the dated inscriptions of eastern India generally mark time according to the regnal year of the current king. What does that mean for the Muṇḍeśvarī and Mandār Hill inscriptions? It should mean that the year 30 of each refers to a regnal year, Udayasena's in the case of the Muṇḍeśvarī record and an unnamed local king's in the case of the Mandār Hill inscription. In neither case, though, could such regnal-year dates be translated into absolute dates, for Udayasena is otherwise unknown, and the monarch of the Mandār Hill inscription is not identified.

The only other possibility is that the year 30 refers to Harṣa's reign, an appealing possibility. That year, 636 A.D., would be appropriate for the Muṇḍeśvarī inscription, since the style of the Muṇḍeśvarī temple indicates an early seventh-century date;[29] it also might be appropriate for the Mandār Hill inscription, in spite of the early date Sircar assigns the palaeography, closer to the time of the spate of building activity on the hill that occurred during Ādityasena's reign.[30] Harṣa ruled for almost half a century, and he held authority over a huge territory that included both Muṇḍeśvarī and Mandār Hill; so it is not impossible that his thirtieth regnal year might mark time in the inscriptions of these two places. Moreover, that was an important year of Harṣa: As Hsuan Tsang noted, "After thirty years his arms reposed, and he governed everywhere in peace."[31] That would certainly be a propitious time for anyone to endow a sacred site.

Still, if the year 30 refers to Harṣa at all, it should be taken as a regnal year, corresponding with 636 A.D., not a year in an era that extended beyond his reign, although a Harṣa era certainly did exist. In fact, one image inscription from eastern India, the sole exception to the apparent practice of using regnal year dates, bears a date that almost surely must be referred to the Harṣa era. This is the Sūrya image from Shahpur, now lost and never photographed. If found, it would be an extraordinarily important document for the history of art since the figure bears an inscription that states the year in an unspecified era and more importantly identifies the reigning monarch as Ādityasena, confirming its seventh-century date. Hence, it is the only sculpture from all north India securely dated to this time . The inscription's numerical date has been read variously as 55, 66, or 88;[32] in any case, the only known era that might apply would be the Harṣa era. I have no doubt that there was a Harṣa era used after Harṣa's death; only its use in Magadha is surprising. But even if the date in this Shahpur inscription does refer to the Harṣa era, that

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single exception does not really invalidate the principle that continuous eras were generally not used in eastern India. Where such eras are used, an explanation is usually apparent. That is the case when the Gupta era is used in legal documents such as land transfers, or by pilgrims to Bodhgaya who originate from other parts of India, or much later when the Vikrama and Śaka eras are used by monarchs who temporarily encroached upon Pāla territory. But even in this last-mentioned case, under some invading kings, most notably the Pratīhāra Mahendrapāla, the eastern Indian tradition of reckoning time by regnal years was followed.

NOTES

1. R.D. Banerji, "The Mundesvari Inscription of Udayasena. The [Harsa] Year 30," *E.I.*, Vol. IX (1907–1908), pp. 289–290.

2. See the preceding paper, by G.S. Gai.

3. Banerji, "Mundesvari Inscription," pp. 289–290.

4. N.G. Majumdar, "The Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription of the Time of Udayasena: The Year 30," *I.A.*, Vol. XLIX (February, 1920), pp. 21–29 and D.R. Bhandarkar, *Inscriptions of Northern India*, No. 1257.

5. D.C. Sircar, "Inscriptions from Mandar Hill," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVI (1966), pp. 304–306.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

7. D.R. Bhandarkar, "Mathura Pillar Inscription of Chandragupta II, G.E. 61," *E.I.*, Vol. XXI (1931), pp. 1–9.

8. J.F. Fleet, *C.I.I.*, Vol. III, Calcutta, 1888, pp. 47–52. The date may have appeared in parts of this inscription now missing, although this is unlikely.

9. For the Nalanda inscription, *see* Hirananda Sastri, *Nalanda and its Epigraphic Material*, Vol. 66 of Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi 1942, pp. 77–78; for the Gaya inscription, *see* Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and their Successors, C.I.I.*, Vol. III, pp. 254–257. Both authors provide evidence to prove the spurious nature of these epigraphs.

10. N.G. Majumdar, "Nandpur Copper-Plate of the Gupta Year 169," *E.I.*, Vol. XXIII (1935), pp. 52–56.

11. Theodor Bloch, "Amauna Plate of the Maharaja Nandana: [Gupta-] Samvat 232," *E.I.*, Vol. X (1909–10), pp. 49–51.

12. Radhagovinda Basak, "Dhanaidaha Copper-Plate Inscription of the Time of Kumaragupta I; The Year 113," *E.I.*, Vol. XVII (1923–24), pp. 245–348. The portion of the plate containing two *akṣaras* that had been read as part of the Kumāragupta's name were broken prior to its publication, when the plate was on exhibition in Calcutta.

13. Radhagovinda Basak, "The Five Damodarpur Copper-Plate Inscriptions of the Gupta Period," *E.I.*, Vol. XV (1919–20), pp. 129–132.

14. The one mentioning Kumāragupta's name is the second Dāmodarpur inscription, *ibid.*, pp. 132–134; its date is corrected by K.N. Dikshit, "A Note on the Dates of the Gupta Copper Plates from Damodarpur," *E.I.*, Vol. XVII (1923–24), p. 193. The other two dated to the year 128, but without reference to the monarch, are published by Radhagovinda Basak, "Baigram Copper-Plate of the [Gupta]-Year 128," *E.I.*, Vol. XXI (1931–32), pp. 78–83, and S. Siddhanta, "The Jagdishpur Copper Plate Grant of the Gupta Year 128," *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum*, Vol. I, 1 (1972), pp. 23–37.

15. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, pp. 274–278.

16. Daya Ram Sahni, *Archaeological Museum at Sarnath*, reprint; Delhi 1972, pp. 40–87, records a number of short donative inscriptions that provide the name of the donor but no reference to his place of origin; *see* also John M. Rosenfield, "On the Dated Carvings of Sarnath," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXVI, 1 (1963), pp. 10–11, for three longer Gupta records from Sarnath.

17. Benimadab Barua, "A Bodh-Gaya Image Inscription," *I.H.Q.*, Vol. IX, 2 (1933), pp. 417–419.

18. For example, *see* Ramprasad Chanda, "The Mathura School of Sculpture," *A.S.I.A.R.* 1922–23, p. 169. As I have noted elsewhere, the style is based on the early Kuṣāṇa imagery of Mathura, so if Siharatha brought artists from that place, they must have attempted to revive an antique style instead of working in the contemporary Gupta mode of Mathura. For my discussion of the image, *see* "Bodh-

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gayā Image of the Year 64: A Reconsideration," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XLVII (1972), pp. 151–157. D.R. Bhandarkar, however, remarks "the characters seem to be of the Gupta period; but the dating and language are in the Kushāṇa style. Does the date refer to the Kalachuri era?"—*List.*, No. 1258, Note 4.

19. Bhandarkar, "Mathura Pillar Inscription," pp. 1–9.

20. D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy,* Delhi 1965, pp. 258–267.

21. V.V. Mirashi, *Inscription of the Kalachuri-Chedi Era*, Vol. IV of *C.I.I.*, Ootacamund 1955.

22. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 251–258.

23. B.N. Puri, *The History of the Gujara-Pratīhāras*, Bombay 1957, Appendix A, pp. 147–150. Note that regnal-year dates are used only for those Pratīhāra inscriptions found in eastern India, numbers 18–24 in the Appendix.

24. K.N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur, Bengal*, Vol. 55 of Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India (Delhi 1938), p. 75.

25. R.D. Banerji, *The Pālas of Bengal*, Vol. V, No. 3 of Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta 1915), p. 64, and Bhandarkar List No. 1645.

26. A.M. Broadley, "The Buddhistic Remains of Bihar," *J.A.S.B.*, Vol. XLI (1872), p. 281. Broadley quotes R.K. Bhandarkar's reading of the inscription.

27. J.F. Fleet, "Sanskrit and Old-Kanarese Inscriptions: Dighwa-Dubauli Plate of the Maharaja Mahendrapala. (Harsha)-Samvat 155," *I.A.*, Vol. XV (1886), pp. 105–107. The reading was corrected by D.R. Bhandarkar, "Epigraphic Notes and Questions," *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* Vol. XXI (19), p. 410, and Bhandarkar's List No. 40.

28. Roma Niyogi, *The History of the Gahadvala Dynasty*, Calcutta 1959, Appendix B, pp. 243–260, especially numbers 25 and 79.

29. Even if the inscription does not refer to the temple's dedication, it indicates a time of building activity on the hill.

30. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, pp. 211–212.

31. Samuel Beal, trans., *Si-Yu-Ki; Buddhist Records of the Western World*, London 1884, Vol. I, p. 213.

32. Fleet, *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, pp. 208–210.

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24

Interpreting the Inscriptions of Mahākūṭa Art Historically

GARY MICHAEL TARTAKOV

INTRODUCTION

THE CONNECTION of Maṅgaleśa's *dharma-jayastambha* inscription to the Mahākūṭeśvara temple at Mahākūṭa has been established well enough to require a careful analysis by anyone who would separate them. Because it is one of the few dated constructions of the prolific stone art of the early Calukya period, the *dharma-jayastambha* is one of the few stable guide posts by which any chronology of the other monuments of the tradition may be fastened. And many scholars have done so, from Henry Cousens and Percy Brown to Stella Kramrisch, K.R. Srinivasan, and K.V. Soundara Rajan.[1]

Unfortunately the *dharma-jayastambha* itself has not remained as well fixed in its place as one might like. It has been uprooted from its original historical location, and moved to the gateway of Gol Gumbaz, at Bijapur, where the British set up a convenient museum. This is a fact which, when added to the confusion in the earliest reports of that original location, has served to mislead many later scholars. The major art historiographical problem of interpreting Maṅgaleśa's *dharma-jayastambha* inscription is not one of the palaeography or translation of its verbal message, but of the archaeological situation of the pillar and the appropriate designation of which structures—if any—it refers to.

Mahākūṭa is one of the better known, if not better understood, sites of early Calukya temple remains. Four kilometers east of Bādāmi, on the opposite side of the same ghat, it has been studied along with that site, Paṭṭaḍakal (10 kilometers east) and Aihoḷe (10 kilometers further east and north) down stream along the Malaprabhā River, as the major concentration of early Calukya temple art in Karnataka. The site contains remains of nearly thirty temples, of which over twenty still can be profitably studied.[2] Except for two later temples, to the east, and three small temples and a variety of fragments, all of these remains are within the confines of the walled compound round the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī (tank). Three of these temples, out of the twenty-two that can be attributed to the early Calukya period, are of the Dravidian style. The rest are variations of the northern style, and though they are related to the Dravidian style temples and must be studied in relation to them, they are distinct enough to be considered separately.

The first art historical analysis of the temples was produced by Henry Cousens in a brief chapter of his *Cālukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*.[3] Cousens focused exclusively on the two large Dravidian style temples within the enclosure, which he interpreted in reference to the inscription on the *dharma-jayastambha* found outside the enclosure and translated earlier by James Fleet.[4] Following Fleet,

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Cousens recognized the closeness of the name of the god mentioned in the inscription (Makuṭeśvaranātha) to that of the main temple under worship within the compound (Mahākuteśvara), and went on to suggest that they were connected and that the date of the pillar's inscription (the fifth rengal year of Maṅgaleśa, corresponding to 602 A.D.)[5] was also directly associated with the creation of the temple now called the Mahākūṭeśvara.

Close and detailed scrutiny of the evidence in relation to early Calukya architecture and history as a whole and the full range of the materials at the site of Mahākūṭa lead me to quite a different conclusion. It turns out that Maṅgaleśa's pillar and its inscription are not connected to the Mahākūṭeśvara, but rather to one or two other temples at the site, which Cousens was apparently not aware of: the Bānanti Guḍi and possibly the temple under the cliff to the west. The Mahākūṭeśvara itself can be better understood as a temple of the early eighth century, in association with other inscriptions on its fabric and elsewhere.

This new interpretation is established on the basis of a careful reading and coordination of the inscriptions and the monuments of the site in combination and in association with the full range of our understanding of early Calukya art and history. I am offering it here with particular interest in pointing out how neither epigraphical evidence nor visual imagery (archaeological remains) separately, or even both together, can be treated as if they were independent of interpretations of the history they preserve and represent. The meaning of each bit of evidence—like that of each word in a sentence—comes from its relation to the other bits with which it is combined, and the meaning of the whole is not clear except as used in relation to the reality to which it refers.

MANGALEŚA'S DHARMA-JAYASTAMBHA AND ITS INSCRIPTION IN MODERN HISTORIES

It has been a widely shared assumption that Maṅgaleśa's *dharma-jayastambha* and its inscription of 602 A.D. were particularly connected with the white-washed temple within the compound at Mahākūṭa, called the Mahākūṭeśvara, today the most important temple at the site. With only two other monuments dated by inscription to the first hundred years of Calukya rule, the temple appeared very important for any chronology of early Calukya architectural development. It was thus a major cornerstone of my understanding of the monuments of the Calukyas before my acquaintance with the site of Mahākūṭa and the pillar itself led me to question Cousens' association of the two, and before I was able to see the full range of temples built at other Calukya sites in Karnataka and Andhra.

The *dharma-jayastambha* which Maṅgaleśa claims to have erected,[6] is a free-standing pillar (Plate 143), quite similar to one remaining in the Rāvaṇa Phaḍi complex at Aihoḷe (Plate 144).[7] It is a fluted monolith of 16 slightly concave facets, 54.6 cm in diameter and 4.44 m in height, which was capped by an *āmalaka* of 36 flutes, 82.55 cm in diameter and 48.25 cm high.[8] It was an independent structure, which is to say that it was never a subsidiary part of any particular temple's fabric.

The message on the pillar records Maṅgaleśa's victory over Buddha (rāja), a Kalacuri ruler, and his subsequent gift of ten villages to the God Makuṭeśvaranātha, made in association with, and in the presence of Durlabhadevī, the wife of Pulakeśī I, his father, and possibly the mother of Kīrtivarmā, his elder brother, whom he followed on the Calukya throne.[9] It refers to a God already then established at the site, and previously patronized by Kīrtivarmā and Pulakeśī.

> The wealth of the Kalatsūri has been expended in the idol-procession of the temple of (our) own god. And (therefore) this property, which at (their) own idol-procession was assigned by our father and elder brother to (the god) Makuṭeśvaranātha,—supplement it, by (bestowing the) enjoyment of the ten villages.[10]

Thus, though it mentions no particular structure, it does refer to a royally patronized worship going back four decades or more, to the reign of Pulakeśī (*c.* 543–566/7 A.D.), and including images substantial enough to be taken out in procession.

Modern historiographical confusion as to the pillar's significance began with Fleet's report of it in 1881. Attempting to explain the pillar's location, Fleet wrote of Mahākūṭa at that time (*see* Plate 145, Figure 1) that:

> the temples are in a courtyard, the chief entrance of which is at the north-east of it. On each side of the gateway there is a large, almost life sized, figure of a *Rākshasa* or demon . . .still known by the names of Vātāpi and Ilvala, and . . .intended as

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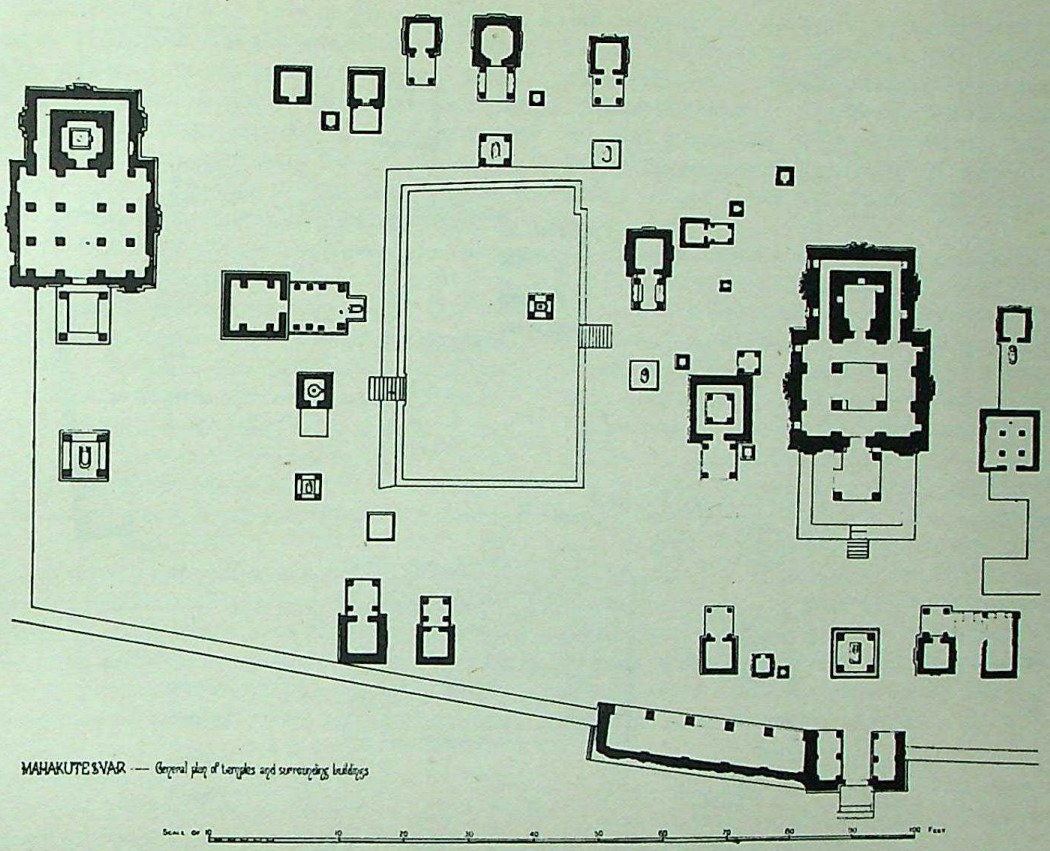

Figure 1. Plan of the Mahākūṭeśvara group. After Henry Cousens' *Chalukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*, Plate XXVII. Late 19th century. By permission, Archaeological Survey of India.

> statues of these persons. About ten yards to the east of this gateway lies a large close-grained red-sandstone monolith pillar. It is about 1′ 9″ in diameter and has sixteen sides . . . .[11]

Unable to read the inscription or take impressions at the time of his visit, Fleet continued in his notice to describe the compound and the tank and to offer translations of three of the six inscriptions in the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, which he could read and found to be of interest.

> Inside the courtyard, towards the east end of it there is a large masonry tank called the *Vishṇu-pushkariṇi* . . . on the west side of the pool, there stands in the water a liṅga-shrine, with a *pancha-mukhaliṅga* . . .[12]

and

> The only two temples of any size in the courtyard are those of Mallikārjuna and Mahākūṭeśvara. The former stands in the south-east corner of the courtyard; . . . the temple of Mahākūṭéśvara, at which the following three inscriptions are, is near the west end of the compound.[13]

A visit to the site of Mahākūṭa reveals that it contains not one but two gateways (Figure 2). One is north of center on the east side of the compound wall, which opens directly into the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, and serves as the main entrance to the courtyard. But, it is not on the "north-east corner," and it does not bear *rākṣasa* images. The other gateway, which does bear prominent *rākṣasa* images, is located on a corner of the compound, but it is the south-west corner (facing south), totally outside of the present compound.

Looking at the Archaeological Survey's site plan

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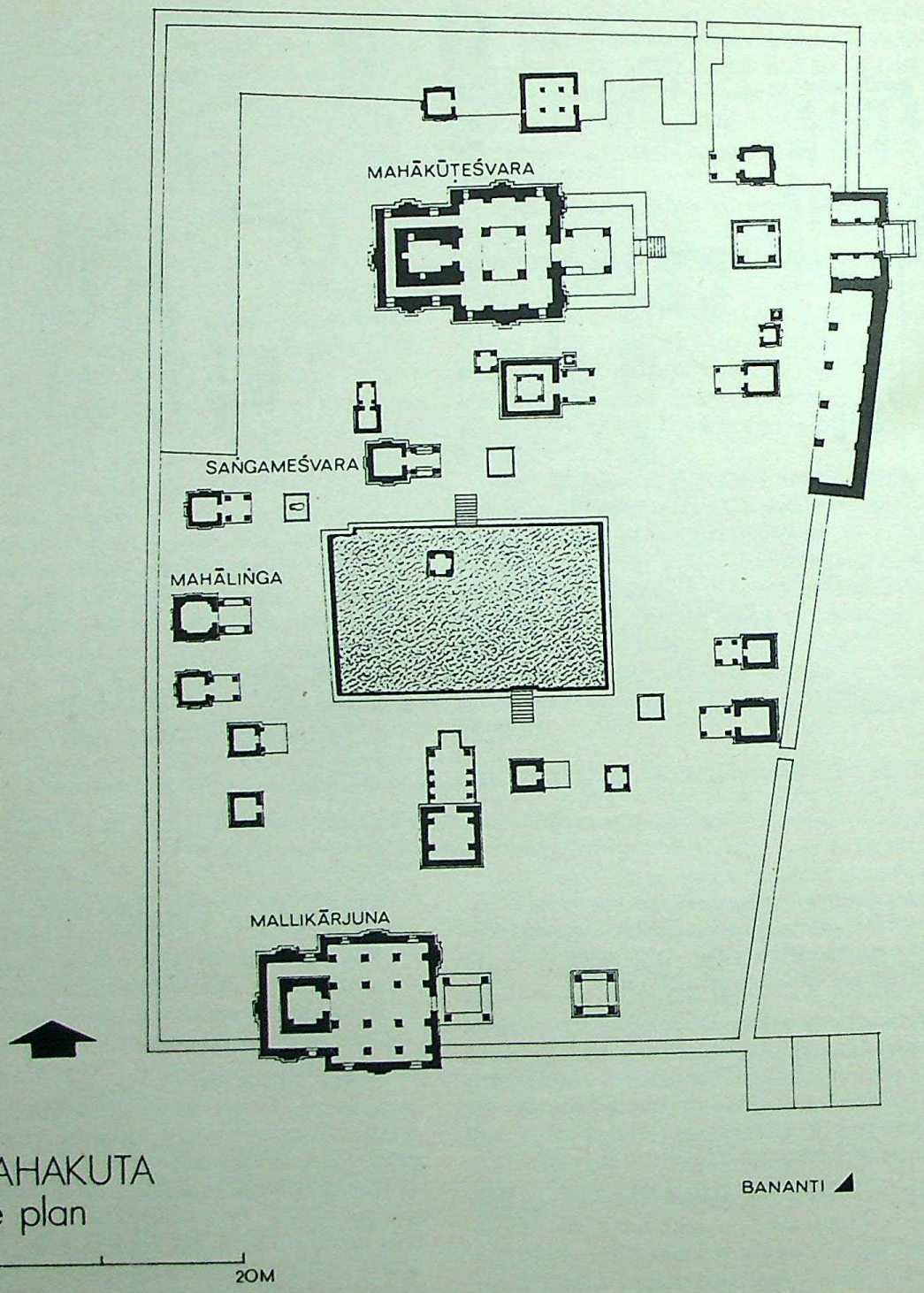

Figure 2. Mahākūṭa. Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī compound, site plan. (After George Michell, *Early Western Calukyan Temples*, Drawing 8, with minor alteration, 1975.) Early Calukya with Rāṣṭrakūṭa additions, and later alterations.

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of Fleet's time (Figure 1), later published by Henry Cousens,[14] it is seen that this second gateway—the *rākṣasa* gateway—is not included. Further, unlike most of the Survey's maps, but like many other site plans and temple plans, no indication of compass directions is included. Comparing this site plan to the description Fleet offers, in locating both structures and inscriptions on structures, his analysis was consistently accurate in the internal relationships it offered, but flawed by its compass orientation. Fleet puts the Mallikārjuna temple in the southeast and the Mahākūṭeśvara temple in the west of the compound, for instance, though they are actually in the south and the north. All fourteen directional references he offers make the same consistent error: correct relative to each other, they are misaligned with the compass. Fleet thus apparently got his otherwise correct map of the site turned ninety degrees, reading east for north, south for west, and so on.

The source of this confusion was probably a combination of the limits of the Survey's site plan and his own notes. The site plan showed the *prākāra* gateway visible from inside the compound, but not the outer *rākṣasa* gateway visible outside the compound, and he confused the two, conflating them into one. He maintained these same directions a decade later when he published his translation of the *dharma-jayastambha*.

The Survey's draughtsmen and Fleet were not the only ones to create a difficult situation for studying the site. The later site plan published by the amateurs Pierre Rambach and Vitold DeGolish, in their beautiful but quite misleading book,[15] included both gateways, but mistakenly *within* the *prākāra* wall. There is reason, therefore, to be thankful to George Michell for his more complete plan of 1975, which is based on the Survey's plan, as published by Cousens,[16] but improves on it including correct compass indication and the location of the *rākṣasa* gateway.

The temples themselves were not brought into the light of modern historiographical interest until 1926, when Henry Cousens included them in his *Cālukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*, a volume in the Archaeological Survey's *New Imperial Series* (written as much as a decade and a half earlier but delayed in publication).[17] While not confusing the compass directions, in his discussion of the temples, Cousens extended Fleet's confused but general association of the pillar with the site into a more specific and therefore more misleading connection of the pillar with the Mahākūṭeśvara temple. This view is most explicit in his historical introduction to the Calukyas, where he states: "the important inscription upon a great sandstone pillar, which was found lying near the old temple of Mahākūṭeśvara .... tells of an additional grant made in continuation of a previous one, to the god Mahākūṭeśvaranātha.[18] In reality, the inscription refers to the god Makūṭeśvaranātha, and the pillar was found elsewhere.

Cousens' discussion of the site is not his own; it is confined largely to a rewriting of Fleet's earlier description of it and a minimal reference to the style of the temples pictured in two accompanying photographs and the site plan. Like Fleet, Cousens mentions both gateways as if they were one, without distinguishing between them. Discussing the temples within the compound, he says: "The largest and principal one, facing the entrance, is dedicated to the god Mahākūṭeśvara."[19] He then says, following a repetition of Fleet's description of the Iḷvala and Vātāpi legend, that, "on either side of the entrance gateway to the enclosure, is an almost life sized *dvārapāla*, or doorkeeper, which are called by their names."[20] And he goes on specifically to associate the pillar with the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, while noting that the pillar had since been removed to Bijāpur.

> Lying outside the enclosure was found a fallen column of sandstone, around whose shaft is engraved a long inscription. It, no doubt, once stood before the temple of Mahākūṭeśvara, just as a similar column stands before the Brahmanical cave at Aihole and at the temples of Virūpāksha and Mallikārjuna at Pattadakal.[21]

And he concludes that the Mahākūṭeśvara temple,

> must have been built some time before this column was raised, else mention would have been made of its erection in this, and such a column with its carefully fluted sides and well cut capital would have been set up before a meaner structure that would have preceded this one.[22]

Nearly every writer on the temples since that time has followed Cousens' suggestions, the lone exceptions being George Michell and myself and now Carol Radcliffe Bolon.[23] Michell has confined his interest in the column to pointing out its independence from the temples within the compound, which he has then proceeded to redate more appropriately. As is evident, I have found it useful to consider the original situation of the pillar and the gateways at greater length.

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When Fleet says the inscribed column was found, "about ten yards to the east of this gateway"—the *rākṣasa* gateway—I believe that it is his clear sight of the demon guardians (Plate 145) that should be trusted, rather than his (later?) compass designations. "Ten yards" beyond the *rākṣasa* gateway would place the pillar south of the compound, at the base of the hillside running southeast of it, about 100 meters from the Mahākūṭeśvara. It would also put it directly before another temple, the Bāṇanti Guḍi, which was apparently unknown or uninteresting to Cousens.

The accompanying sketch plan (Figure 3) shows the relative positions of the compound, the pillar, and the Bāṇanti Guḍi. The measurements are approximate, because the area is densely covered in underbrush, and it is not the work of a trained surveyer. The location ten meters out from the gateway is marked, today, by a depression two meters deep and five meters across. There is a fragment lying nearby which matches the size of the pillar's shaft and the form of the base on the Aihoḷe pillar (Plate 144). It is about 70 meters from the Bāṇanti Guḍi.[24]

The *dharma-jayastambha* bearing Maṅgaleśa's inscription of 602 is thus an independent structure that is not only distinct from the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, but originally located far from it. Its inscription, referring to Maṅgaleśa's current donation and previous gifts of (Pulakeśī and Kīrtivarmā) to Makuṭeśvaranātha, may refer to the same major deity of the site, perhaps the same as that today called Mahākūṭeśvara and located in the Mahākūṭeśvara temple. But it does not date either the construction or the existence of that particular temple structure.

THE BĀṆANTI GUḌI AND THE CLIFF TEMPLE AT MAHĀKŪṬA

There may be no way to know for sure where precisely the Lord Makuṭeśvara, referred to in Maṅgaleśa's inscription, was installed at the time of Maṅgalesa's gift. But art and historical analysis of the site does make a number of things clear. First, of the more than twenty temples at the site surviving intact today, only two could have existed at the time of the inscription. And second, of these, one, the Bāṇanti Guḍi, stands more or less in front of the pillar's original location. As expensive and rare as fine stone construction has always been, this small temple, now isolated on the

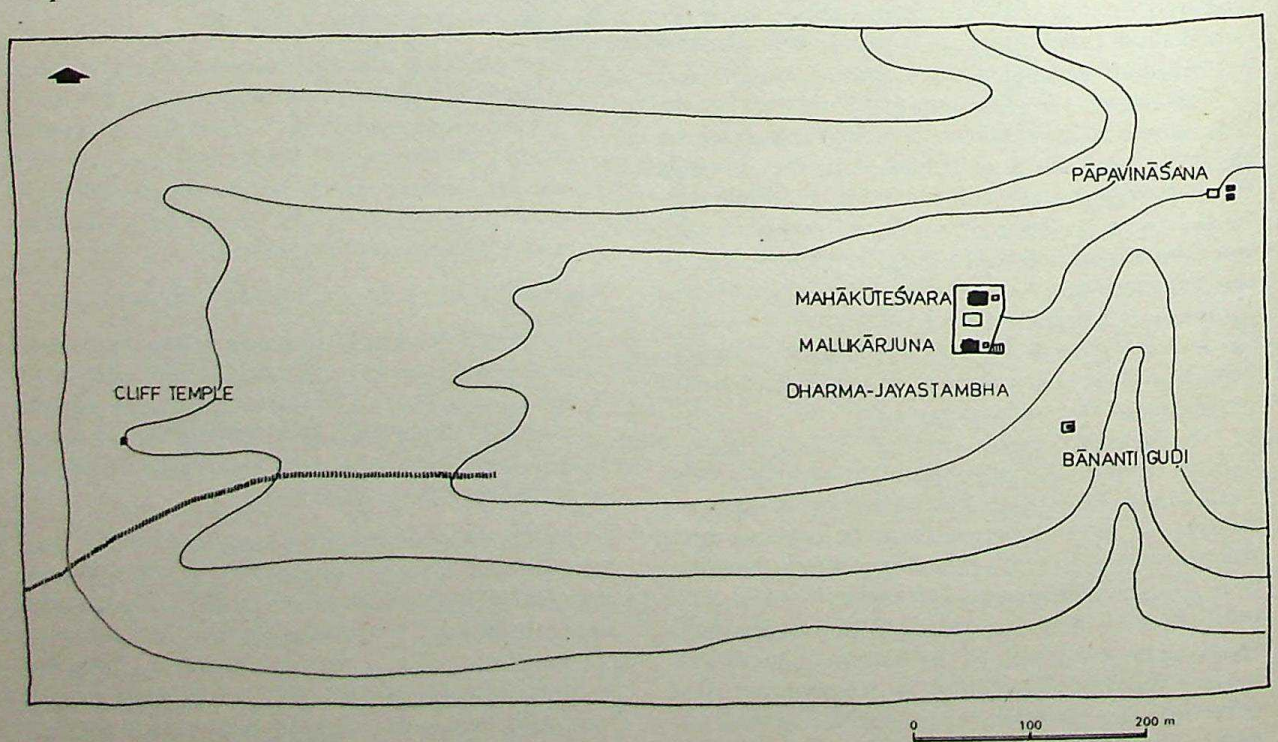

Figure 3. Sketch plan of Mahākūta site.

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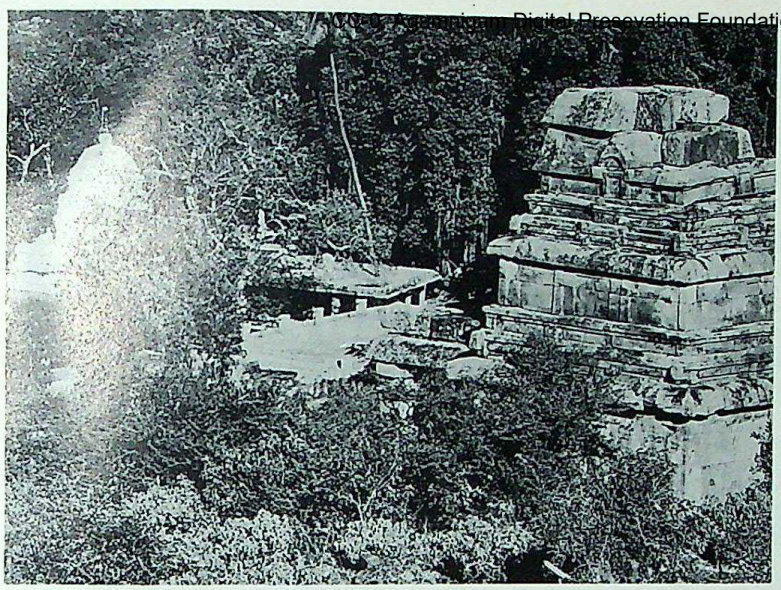

Plate 146. Mahākūṭa. Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī compound, from the south. Early Calukya, with Rāṣṭrakūṭa additions and later alterations.

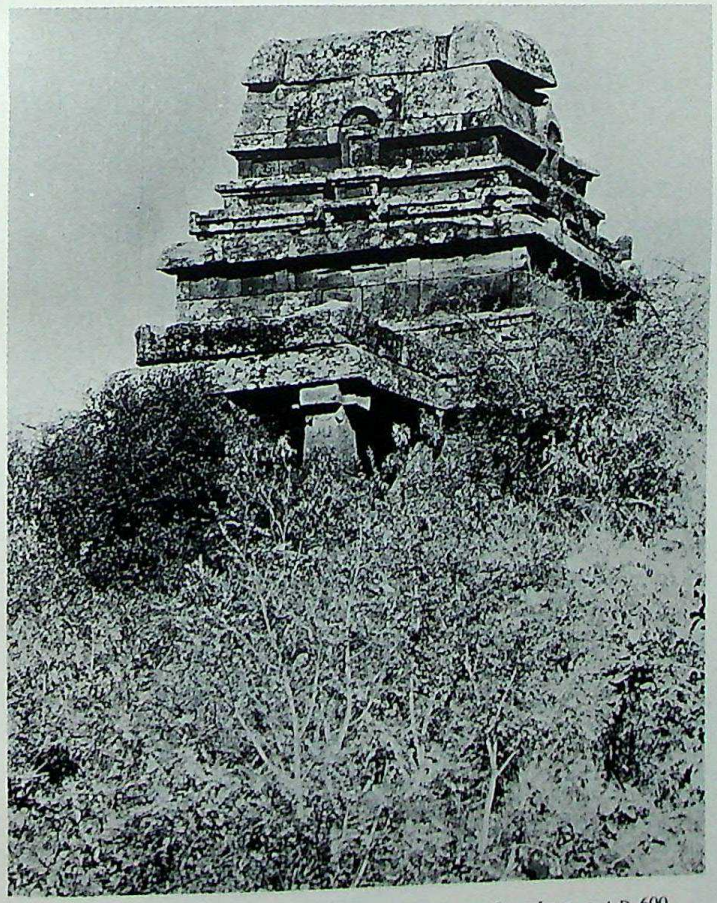

Plate 147. Mahākūṭa. Bānanti Guḍi. Early Calukya, first phase. *c.* A.D. 600.

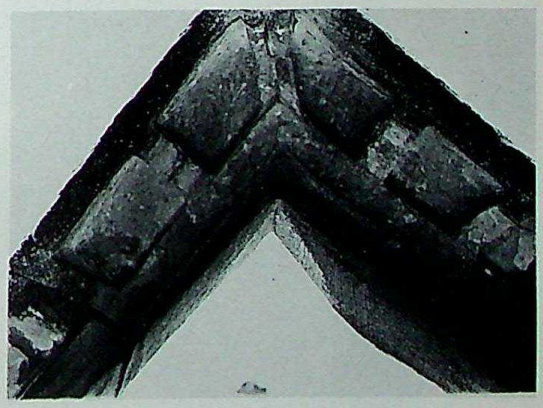

Plate 148. Mahākūṭa. Bānanti Guḍi, detail beneath eaves. Early Calukya (first phase). *c.* A.D. 600.

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Plate 149. Mahākūṭa. Temple beneath cliff to west of site, view from the southeast. Early Calukya (first phase). Late 6th to early 7th century. A.D.

Plate 150. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple. Early Calukya. Middle of the reign of Vijayāditya, *c.* A.D. 720.

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Plate 151. Mahākūṭa. Mallikārjuna temple. Early Calukya. Middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. *c.* A.D. 720.

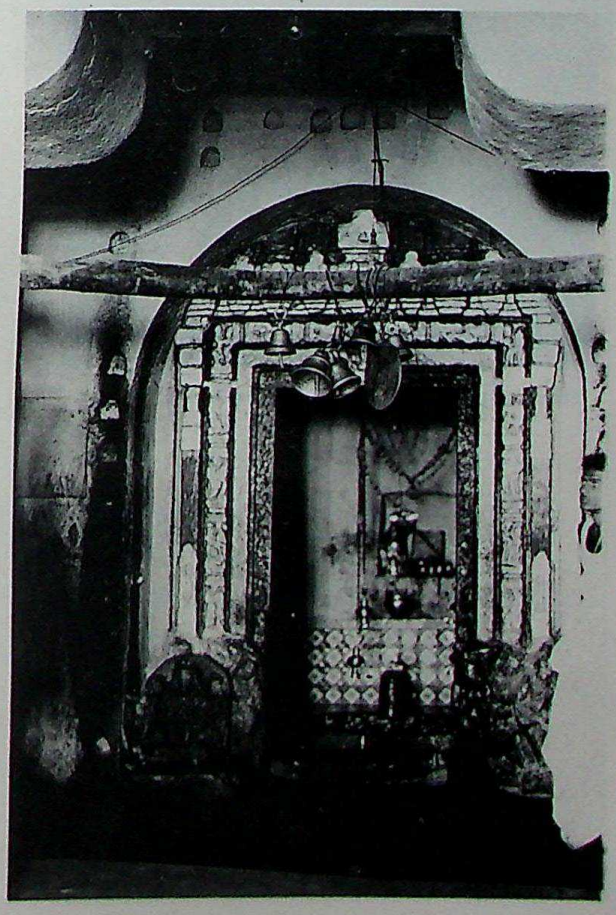

Plate 152. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, *garbhagrha* doorway. Early Calukya. Middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. *c.* A.D. 720 with later reconstruction.

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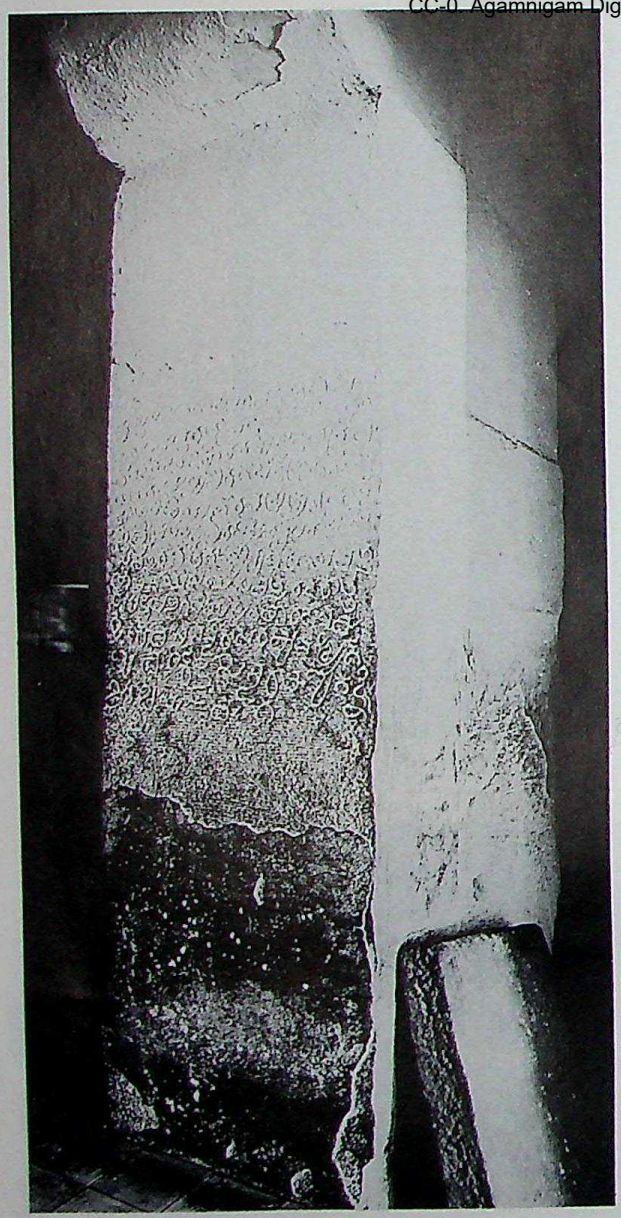
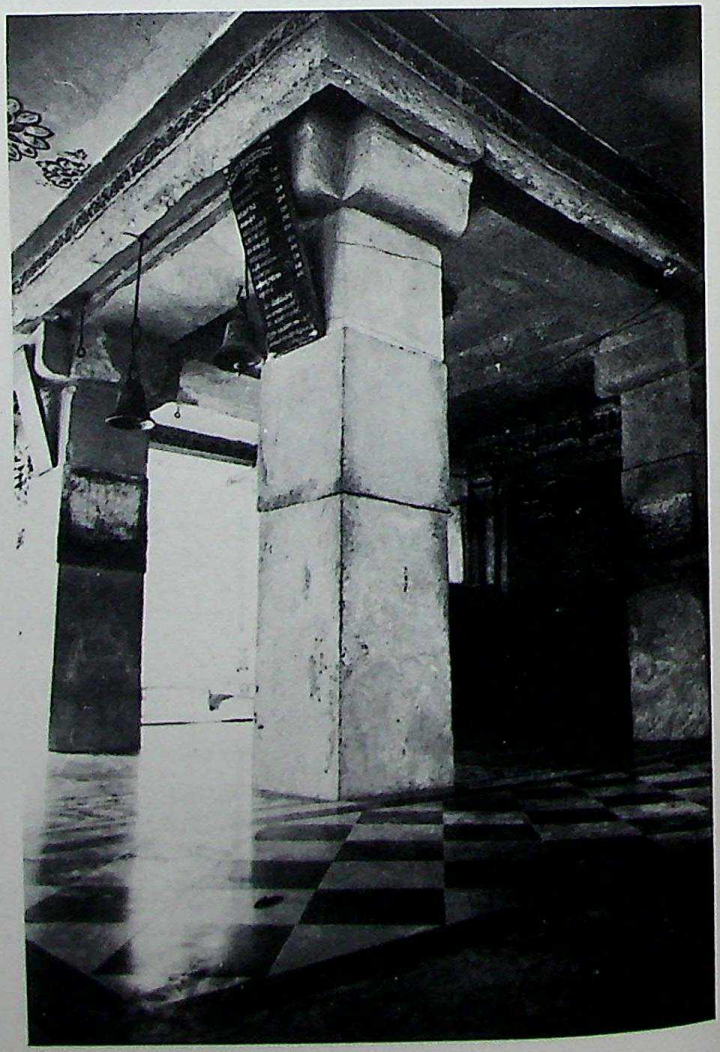


Plate 153. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, Vināpoṭi inscription

Plate 154. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillars with Vināpoṭi's inscription on the left pillar, and Puṭṭimaṇināga's on the right. Early Calukya, middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. *c.* A.D. 720.



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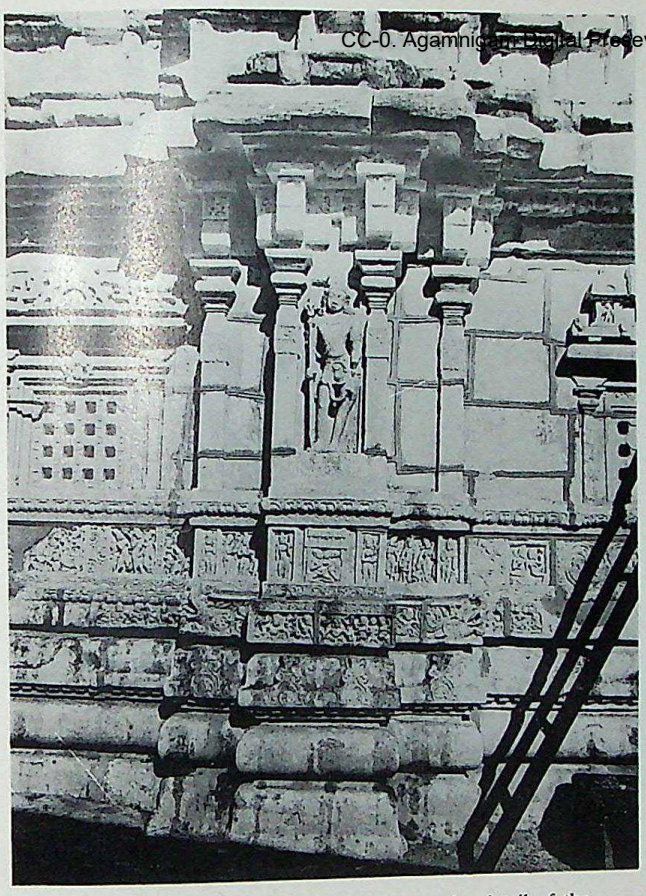

Plate 155. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, detail of the south side of the *maṇḍapa*. Early Calukya, middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. *c.* A.D. 720.

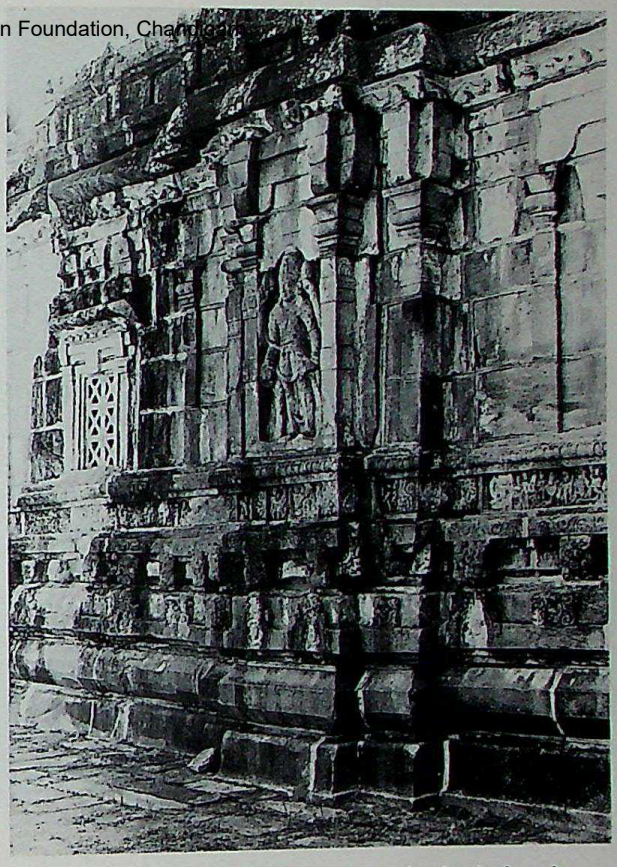

Plate 156. Mahākūṭa. Mallikārjuna temple, detail of north side of *maṇḍapa*. Early Calukya, middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. *c.* A.D. 720.

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Plate 157. Bādāmi. Mālegiṭṭi Śivālaya. Early Calukya, end of Vijayāditya's reign. *c.* A.D. 730.

Plate 158. Paṭṭadakal. Virūpākṣa (originally Lokeśvara) temple. Early Calukya, reign of Vikramāditya II, 733/4-744/5 A.D.

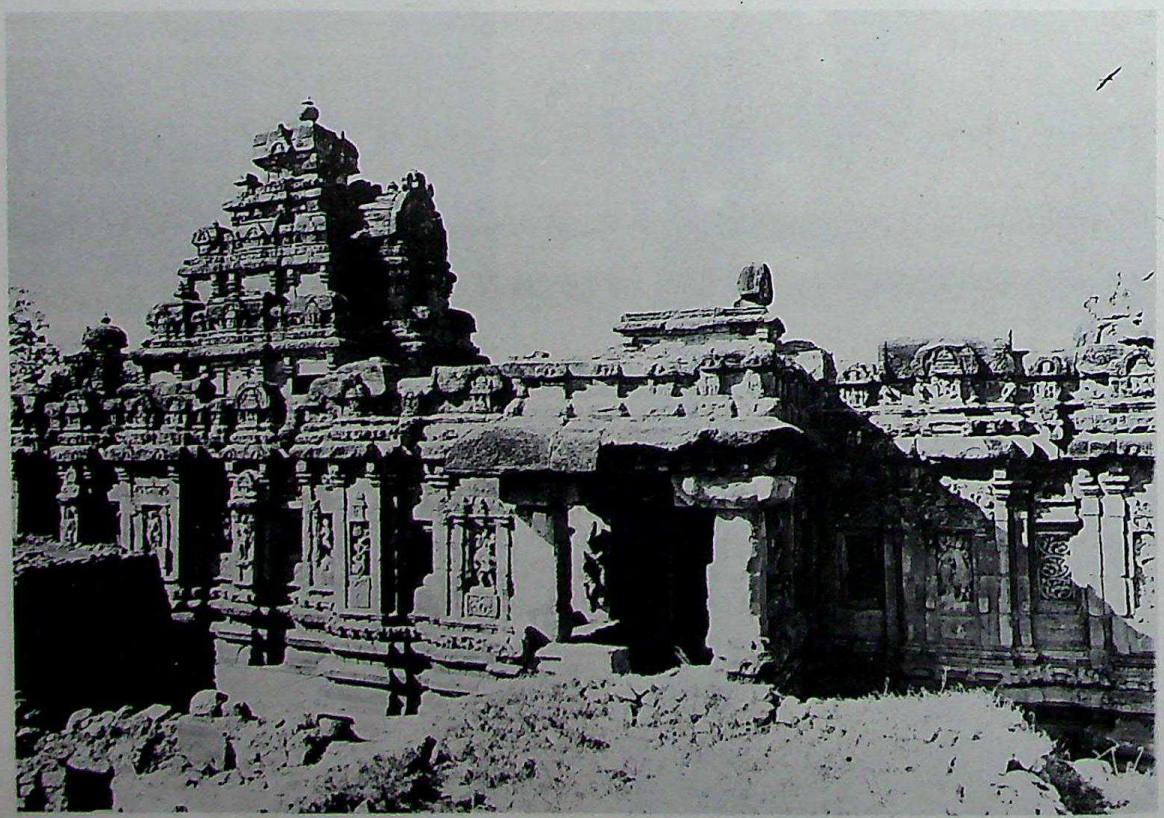

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Plate 159. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, view from southwest. Early Calukya. *c.* A.D. 681-696.

Plate 160. Aihoḷe. Temple by Rāvaṇa phaḍi cave. Early Calukya. *c.* 6th century A.D.

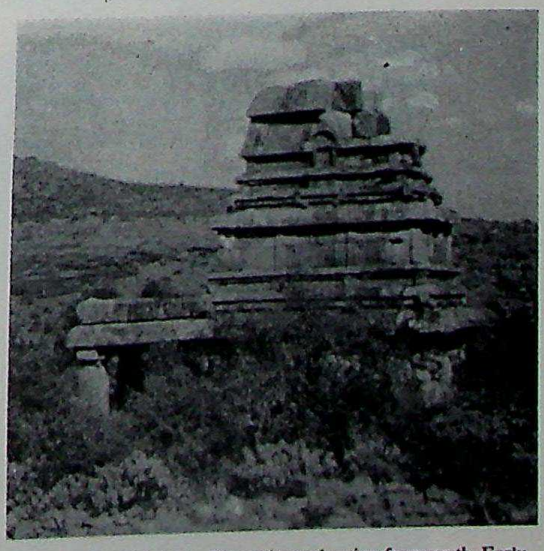

Plate 161. Mahākūṭa. Bānanti temple, view from south. Early Calukya. *c.* 6th century A.D.

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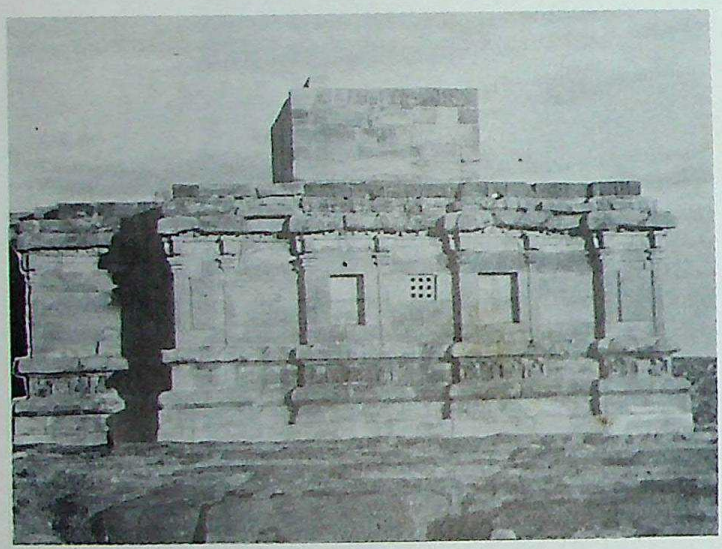

Plate 162. Aihole. Jaina temple (Meguṭi), view from north. Early Calukya. (Original portion only.) *c* A.D. 634.

Plate 163. Bādāmī. Upper Śivālaya, Narasiṁha in north niche. Early Calukya. *c.* A.D. 600.

Plate 164. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, Śiva in south niche. Early Calukya. *c.* A.D.681-696.

Plate 165. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, detail of *adhiṣṭhāna* frieze.

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hillside, once must have been connected with others in a complex with greater prominence and importance than it commands today. If the Bāṇanti Guḍi is not the specific temple of the god referred to in Maṅgaleśa's inscription, it is the closest thing we have to it.

The Bāṇanti Guḍi stands on the hillside overlooking the compound of temples around the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī tank, to its southeast (Plate 146). Engulfed in the jungle, it was missed until relatively recently by scholars who have written on the site, only emerging into print and illustrations in the last decade and a half.[25] Its design (Plates 147 and 148, Figure 4), represents an early stage in the development of the Dravidian style in stone in the Karnataka region. It is one of only six structural temples that, along with the rock-cut shrines of Bādāmi and Aihoḷe, make up the fourteen temples securely connected to the first century of early Calukya rule (*c.* 543/4–642 A.D.).

In recent years, study of the hundreds of monuments at the well-known early Calukya sites and others spread throughout Karnataka and Andhra have revealed over 140 structures of the early Calukya period.[26] My own work among these temples has revealed a major division into distinctive chronological phases, based on the stylistic development of particular motifs, that correlate relative stylistic patterns with firmly dated monuments and the historical periodization of the Calukya dynasty established by inscriptions and other evidence. Among these phases, a basic break can be found between those monuments created before the dynasty's eclipse, following the Pallava capture of Bādāmi in 642 A.D., and those created after the resurgence of the Calukyas in the reign of Vikramāditya I in 654/5 A.D.

The monuments of the first phase of Calukya art are characterized by shared features that can be seen on all fourteen temples and studied in great detail, particularly on the two dated monuments of the period, Bādāmi's Cave III of 578 A.D. (Śaka 500) and Aihoḷe's Mēguṭi of 634/5 A.D. (Śaka 556). These features clearly show the simplest stages of the Calukya style which reveal a consistent development of structural conception and decorative motifs in growing size, complexity, elaboration, and accumulation during the course of its existence. The features of the first phase include wall eaves extending over undecorated moldings in contrast to eaves extending over a *haṁsamālā*, *bhūtamālā*, and eventually a wave-garland-and-*bhūtamālā* course in the later phase. Temples of the first phase lack the large *dvārapālas*

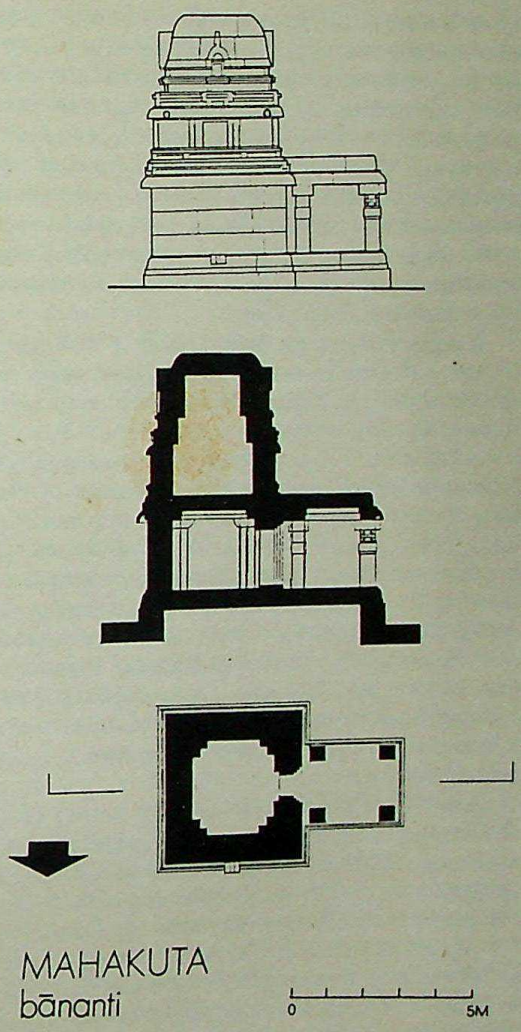

Figure 4. Mahākūṭa. Bānanti Guḍi, elevation, section, and plan. (After George Michell, *Early Western Calukyan Temples*, Drawing 4, with minor additions, 1975.)

and the *nadīdevatās* Gaṅgā and Yamunā common on doorframes of the later phase. And as significantly—though there is no space to detail this analysis here—they reveal the simple models of conceptions that take on greater development later.

The Bāṇanti Guḍi fits firmly into this first phase of Calukya architectural traditions. It is a two-story Dravidian style temple with a plain lower story and an articulated upper story (Plates 147 and 148). Its square-domed *śikhara* has a small *nāsikā* in the center

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of each side; this is the culmination of the paneling dividing the upper story into three parts. The eaves of the lower story are projected out over a well articulate frame representing the supporting joists that are completely plain (Plate 148). Its basement is a plain *jagatī*, raised over a plain *upāna* substructure,[27] incorporating the remarkable presence of a *praṇāla* (sanctum altar run-off) on the north.[28] The sanctum interior is now missing its altar and image, though the *liṅga* and *pīṭha* cast into the bushes ten meters to the north show its original dedication to Śiva.

It is possible that the Bāṇanti Guḍi is the work of the same artists who created the Vaiṣṇava temple on the North Fort at Bādāmi. The details and proportions of its two storys are extremely close to those of that temple's two upper storys.[29] Its surprisingly thick walls may reflect the technical construction of that temple's scale. Another feature they have in common, and which they share with the cliff temple (Plate 149), is doorway *śākhās* (jambs) formed by progressively receding courses. Most other Calukya temples of the first phase and all of the second phase have doorway *śākhās* composed of moldings extended to more or less the same wall-face plane, and joined at the bottom by a single panel, as seen in the Mahākūṭeśvara, where it is somewhat obscured by *nadīdevatā* figures rising from this panel (Plate 152).

The cliff temple, which has taken even longer than the Bāṇanti Guḍi to surface in art historical literature, is also outside of the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī compound.[30] It is located three quarters of a kilometer to the west of the site, at the head of a ravine connecting the site with the top of the *ghāṭ* that separates Mahākūṭa from Bādāmi. Directly west of the Bāṇanti Guḍi, it is at the same altitude above the surrounding valley. Although less developed in its architectural details, features of this temple correspond with the characteristics of the first phase of Calukya art. Its details are characteristically simple, and it lacks the more elaborate decorative features found in the structures of the later century.

Its doorway *śākhās* are developed in progressively receding courses. The upper portion of its *pīṭha*, all that is left, resembles closely that in the Rāvaṇa Phaḍi cave at Aihoḷe.[31] A vase and foliage pillar from its porch lying in front of the temple on the ground, shows it to be at least provisionally northern in style, like Cave II at Bādāmi and in contrast to the consistently Dravidian style of the other temples of the first phase. The structure was apparently a temple for Mahiṣāsuramardinī, whose image was originally set into the *pīṭha*, though it now lies beside it, broken and replaced by a *liṅga* in later times.

Cousens' analysis of the relation of the Mahākūṭeśvara to Maṅgaleśa's *dharma-jayastambha* inscription had been accepted until recently, when more thorough study of the Calukya region led to the necessity of going beyond it. Current analysis of the site and records show that the pillar was not attached to any particular structure that can be identified today, and that it was originally located near the Bāṇanti Guḍi, south of the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī compound, rather than in front of the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, within the compound, as many following Cousens have supposed. Of the structures surviving at the site that can be assigned to the period preceding 642 A.D., the Bāṇanti Guḍi's location makes it possibly a structure of the Makuṭeśvaranātha temple alluded to in the inscription. The pillar does not explicitly date the construction or even the existence of the Bāṇanti Guḍi; it does, however, indicate the presence of a temple of Lord Makuṭeśvara at the period and in the general location of the Bāṇanti Guḍi.

THE MAHĀKŪṬEŚVARA AND MALLIKĀRJUNA TEMPLES AT MAHĀKŪṬA

Once it is clear that the temple called the Mahākūṭeśvara at Mahākūṭa today is not the temple of Makuṭeśvaranātha referred to in Maṅgaleśa's inscription, one may turn to considering the temple's actual chronological situation. To do this, both epigraphical and artifactual (archaeological or architectural) evidence is available. The temple contains several inscriptions that relate specifically to it, and it also possesses stylistic and symbolic features that allow correlation of its formal conception with other temples of the Early Calukya period.

The core of the site of Mahākūṭa is constituted by a wall-enclosed compound of nineteen early Calukya temples. The two temples of the dynasty's first phase are built outside of this enclosure, to the southeast and southwest, on hillsides overlooking the compound. At a second tank to the east, called the Pāpavināśana,[32] through which the water from the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī flows, there is a matched pair of Karnataka-Dravida style temples of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period. The southeast gateway of the Viṣṇu Puṣkariṇī compound, with the prominent *rākṣasa* images, has no surviving wall

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attached to it. Its date is probably also Rāṣṭrakūṭa, though its construction was likely supported by local patronage that may still have been Calukya, even though the new Rāṣṭrakūṭa style was used. Between this outer gateway and the entrance to the compound there is a Gaṇapati shrine.

Inside the enclosure, surrounding the tank at its center, are seventeen Northern style temples, in various states of preservation,[33] and two large temples of the Karnataka-Dravida tradition. These last two are the commonly discussed Mahākūṭeśvara and the less-well-known but closely similar Mallikārjuna. The gateway opposite the Mahākūṭeśvara and the *prākāra* wall seem to be of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period, though in some of their upper parts they are much more recent. A look at the site plan reveals how different in scale and orientation these two temples are from the rest which cluster around them and the tank. The northern style temples appear to have been built slightly later, judging from their siting and orientation.

The Mahākūṭeśvara and the Mallikārjuna are a closely matched pair of temples, like those at Pāpavināśana or the much better known and published pair at Paṭṭadakal, a few kilometers east, the Virūpākṣa and the Mallikārjuna (Lōkeśvara and Trailokeśvara) of Vikramāditya II's reign.[34] They exhibit designs, decorative imagery, size, and Śaiva iconographic programs that are as closely parallel to each other as their plans and location, to either side of the similarly proportioned tank, suggest. They are closely paralleled variations of a shared set of formal and symbolic conceptions, representing a single stage of early Calukya architectural and cultural traditions (Plates 150 and 151). They are non-identical twins sharing general characteristics and yet varying in all of their particular details, all in all what would be expected from contemporary but separate workshops working under coordinated patronage. If their location is any guide, they were probably the first temples built beside the tank. The three structures are well enough matched in size and placement to lead to the supposition that they were created in a single coordinated campaign.[35]

In his original note on the inscriptions of Mahākūṭa, Fleet listed six inscriptions found in the Mahākūṭeśvara.[36] Three of these are located on slabs added as supports, against pillars of the interior.[37] Fleet offered a transcription of the longer of these (Plate 153). It records a grant to the temple by *Mahāsāmanta* Bappuvarasa in Śaka 856 (934/5 A.D.), and refers to the site as "Maguḍe". He says the other two on the opposite slab are "Canarese" but lacking in historical interest. The significance of these inscriptions for dating the temple's structure is indicated by their locations on slabs clearly added to the structure subsequent to its original construction. Even though they may have a structural function now, it is clear from their undeveloped forms that they are quite different in fabrics from the banded, square-section pillars they buttress. They were probably added to the temple at the time when the *maṇḍapa* interior underwent the reconstruction that their date may indicate.[38]

Fleet assigned the three inscriptions he found on the pillars of the porch to the early Calukya period. One seems to be an offering of the pillar itself to the temple by Puṭṭimaṇināga. It is, he said, "cut in the same bold and deep letters, with the edges rounded off, as the two inscriptions in the eastern gateway of the Virūpāksha at Paṭṭadakal."[39] That is of the reign of Vikramāditya II 733/4-744/5 A.D. This inscription faces out from the temple's *maṇḍapa*, to the right of the doorway, as one looks in (Plate 154). On the other side of the doorway, he saw an inscription that was blocked and therefore impossible for him to study more than to say that it was similar to this last one. The most interesting inscription on the porch, in any case, is the one on the pillar on the outer corner to the south, facing in (Plate 154). It records a dedication to the god of the temple by Vināpoṭi, "the heart's darling of Vijayāditya," who "having at this very place bestowed the entire gift of a *hiraṇyagarbha* and having made a pedestal for the god with rubies, and having set up its silver umbrella, gave a field ...."[40] The significance of the three porch inscriptions is derived from their existence on integral elements of the temple's structure, as Fleet pointed out. They thus show that the temple was in existence by the end of Vijayāditya's reign.

To date the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, the epigraphic evidence must be interpreted in light of art historical evidence. Epigraphy in itself can translate and interpret the inscriptions, but art historical or archaeological analysis must confirm which of the inscriptions, if any, actually belong to the temple's structure, and to what period of that structure's construction, preservation, or later decoration. The situation of the later inscriptions, on slabs that are not of early Calukya proportions or the temple's original coherent design, qualifies their data as separate from that construction. The presence of the three early Calukya

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inscriptions on integral parts of the original fabric, which is itself coherent with the early Calukya design as a whole, associates their data with the contemporary use of the temple. Art historical interpretation of the epigraphic evidence leads to the conclusion that the temple was in existence by the reign of Vijayāditya 696–733/4 A.D. Further art historical interpretation allows one to narrow the period.

In term of the two basic phases of early Calukya art, the two temples fit firmly into the second phase. They have *haṁsamālā* courses beneath their eaves (Plates 155 and 156). Their wall developments are more plastically articulated than those of the first phase. The major *devakoṣṭha* niches are projected out from the wall's basic surface on plastically compounded panels. The *kūṭa* of its *hāra* riding freely above the silhouette of the connecting *hārāntara* wall course (Plates 150 and 151) are developed beyond the *kūṭa* of the first phase, like those of the North Fort Vaiṣṇava temple at Bādāmi, which are confined to the level of the wall on which they are represented.[41] The motif of a door or window with Garuḍa on its *lalāṭa-bimba*, holding the tails of *nāgas* that course down the sides of the opening is used prominently. The Mahākūṭeśvara carries a mixture of Northern style decorative elements on its otherwise essentially Dravidian scheme.

The second phase of Calukya art begins with the rise of Vikramāditya I and his reassertion of Calukya political power (*c.* 654/5 A.D.) after the dynasty's eclipse following the Pallava conquest of Bādāmi (*c.* 642). But the temples of Mahākūṭa can be more precisely dated because of other epigraphical evidence, which bears upon the chronology of early Calukya art historical development. Several of Vijayāditya's inscriptions mention the event of his victory in north India, late in his father's reign, and his subsequent claim to have "acquired for himself the emblems of Gaṅgā and Yamunā,"[42] as "brilliant (insignia of) mighty sovereignty."[43] Images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā are not known in the Deccan before this time. (Previously the closest southern appearance of this imagery is on the northern periphery of the Deccan, in Maharashtra and the Konkan—at Jogeshvari, Ajanta, etc.) The Gaṅgā and Yamunā images that commonly flank the doorways of Calukya temples in Vijayāditya's reign and after cannot be found before the end of his father's (Vinayāditya's) reign, when this victory and intensified contact with northern India is claimed. This therefore narrows the range of the temple's date between the later part of Vinayāditya's reign and Vijayāditya's reign.

The final sort of pertinent inscriptions are those dating other early Calukya temples and giving guide posts by which a hypothetical development can be oriented into a coherent overall pattern and anchored in several places. Those of the first phase are found in Cave III at Bādāmi (578 A.D. =Śaka 500) and the Meguṭi at Aihoḷe (634/5 A.D. =Śaka 556). Those of the second phase begin with the Jambuliṅga at Bādāmi, which dates its inauguration to 699 A.D. (Saka 621). The Jambuliṅga is one of a series of closely connected Dravidian style temples in the region, including the Mālegitti Śivālaya and the ruined *vimāna* on the North Fort (often called the "Lower Śivālaya") at Bādāmi, the Nāganātha temple at Nagrāl, and the two large temples at Mahākūṭa, that share a variety of similar features. The Jambuliṅga's ceilings are so close to those in the Mallikārjuna as to make them seem related in execution as well as conception. George Michell, who sums up these structures with more detail than anyone else in print, concludes that the pair at Mahākūṭa belong to the period around the end of the seventh to the first decades of the eighth century in close association with the Jambuliṅga's 699 A.D. date, but before the more elaborate temples of Paṭṭadakal built during Vikramāditya II's time three decades later.[44]

The chronological evolution of early Calukya architecture reveals a continuous stylistic development consistent enough to locate many monuments of the second phase into particular reigns and even parts of reigns. Vijayāditya's thirty-seven-year rule is marked art historically by the Jambuliṅga temple of Bādāmi at its beginning and the never finished Saṅgameśvara temple at Paṭṭadakal at its end (733/4 A.D. =Śaka 655). The Saṅgameśvara is referred to by its original name, Vijayeśvara, in the Paṭṭadakal pillar inscription of Jñānaśiva. Though much of its *vimāna* structure is finished, most of its sculpture is not, and a good deal of its *maṇḍapa* is unfinished or somewhat later. It is, on the other hand, the temple closest to the great pair of temples at the site dating to Vikramāditya II's reign and likely designed within a year or two of Vijayāditya's death since they were finished within a decade of it. Particular features of the Mahākūta temples locate them somewhere in the middle of the development of Vijayāditya's reign. That is distinctly later than the Jambuliṅga and yet distinctly earlier than the Saṅgameśvara.

Both Mahākūṭa temples employ the *haṁsamālā* of

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the second phase, found on the Jambuliṅga, almost exclusively, while they include only about one meter length section of the *bhūtamālā* that succeeded and to some extent replaced the *haṁsamālā* under the eaves and lintels of temples, like the Saṅgameśvara and the Mālegitti Śivālaya, built at the end of Vijayāditya's reign. Nor do these two temples take the leap in size and scale found in the great temples of Vikramāditya's time and in the Saṅgameśvara. My analysis of the ceilings in the Jambuliṅga, the Nāganātha, and the Mallikārjuna at Mahākūṭa indicates the Mallikārjuna as the latest of the three, as do my analyses of other features. I will sum up here, by offering a stylistic analysis of the temples in terms of two of these features: *śikhara* and *adhiṣṭhāna*.

Beginning in the second half of the sixth century, the *śikhara* of the Karnataka-Dravida style grew to be progressively more linear and detailed in its articulation and smaller in scale relatively to the *vimāna* as a whole. This progression can be followed from the nearly undecorated dome of the south temple of the Rāvaṇa Phaḍi complex[45] through the slightly articulated tower of the somewhat later Bāṇanti Guḍi, with its single *nāsikā* in the center of each of its four sides (Plates 146 and 147 and Figure 4), through temples like the pair at Mahākūṭa (Plates 150 and 151), to the Mālegitti Śivālaya (Plate 157), whose octagonal dome is buttressed by a *parivārālaya* of alternating *karṇa* and *pañjara kūṭa* culminating in the temples of Vikramāditya's reign, when the temples of the Karnataka-Dravida style add an *antarāla* to their *garbhagṛha* that is echoed on the exterior of the *vimāna* by a northern style *śukanāsikā* projection from the face of the otherwise quadrilaterally symmetrical tower (Plate 158). Further diminishing scale, generally reduced mass and emphasized linear decorative complexity can be followed into the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period in the Jaina temple at Paṭṭadakal[46] and the Kailāsa at Ellorā, and many other structures.

Compared to other octagonal *śikhara* Dravidian style temples of the second phase, the two temples at Mahākūṭa are a step more elegantly detailed and reduced in proportions than the fragmentary remains of the Nāganātha.[47] They are more developed than the superficially similar isolated *vimāna* on the path up the North Fort at Bādāmi, which dates to the first phase, a century earlier.[48] They are a step less compounded than the tower of a Mālegitti Śivālaya, which is similar but for the doubling of courses supporting the *kūṭa* of the first and second *tala* and correlated reduction in the size of its *śikhara*.

The development of the *adhiṣṭhāna* (basements) shows a similar pattern of progressively increasing numbers of elements and correlated reduction in the scale of each, increasing complexity of organization, the addition of new forms, and general tendency from massive towards linear decorative forms. Basements of the first phase such as those of Bādāmi's Cave III are generally composed of four elements: reading (Figure 5) from the ground up, *upāna* block, leveling the site to a defined plane, a curving *jagatī*, an inset *kaṇṭha*-freize that is often decorated with figurative or floral imagery, and a capping *kapota*. The most elaborate basement of the first phase is the Meguṭi's, which adds a *tripaṭṭa* (three-faceted) *kumuda* to the standard set.

Dravidian style temples of the second phase have basements of five or more distinct moldings. Most of these make use of a *vyālamālā* course, composed of widely spaced *vyāla* (and sometimes other *ihāmrga* or normal animals) and often ending in *makaras*, acting as the caryatid support for a projecting molding edge, and a temple above. This *vyālamālā* course is unknown in the first phase. The Jambuliṅga and Nāganātha have four-element basements in which the *vyālamālā* replaces the *kapota* that was usual earlier. By the end of Vijayāditya's reign, most Dravidian style temples have a six-element *adhiṣṭhāna*, like that on the Mālegitti Śivālaya. The largest temples from the end of Vijayāditya's reign through Vikramāditya's have a six or seven-course *adhiṣṭhāna*. The sequence reads, from the bottom up, *upāna, jagatī, kumuda, kapota, vyālamālā*, and a topping *paṭṭikā*, which often contains floral or figurative decoration. The two great Dravidian temples at Mahākūṭa seem to possess the earliest examples of the six-element basement. That on the Mahākūṭeśvara has a *vṛtta* (round) *kumuda*, where the Mallikārjuna has a *tripaṭṭa kumuda*. (The *upāna* of each is mostly buried in the later paving of the compound.)

I am led by all of these correlated formal developments to place the conception of the designs of the paired Dravidian style temples within the compound at Mahākūṭa into the middle of the reign of Vijayāditya. This correlates well with what is known of their iconographic development. And it also correlates well with what is known of the epigraphic evidence of the dynasty as a whole and of the site of Mahākūṭa in particular. The inscriptions of Vijayāditya's reign in Mahākūṭeśvara temple are apparently not more than

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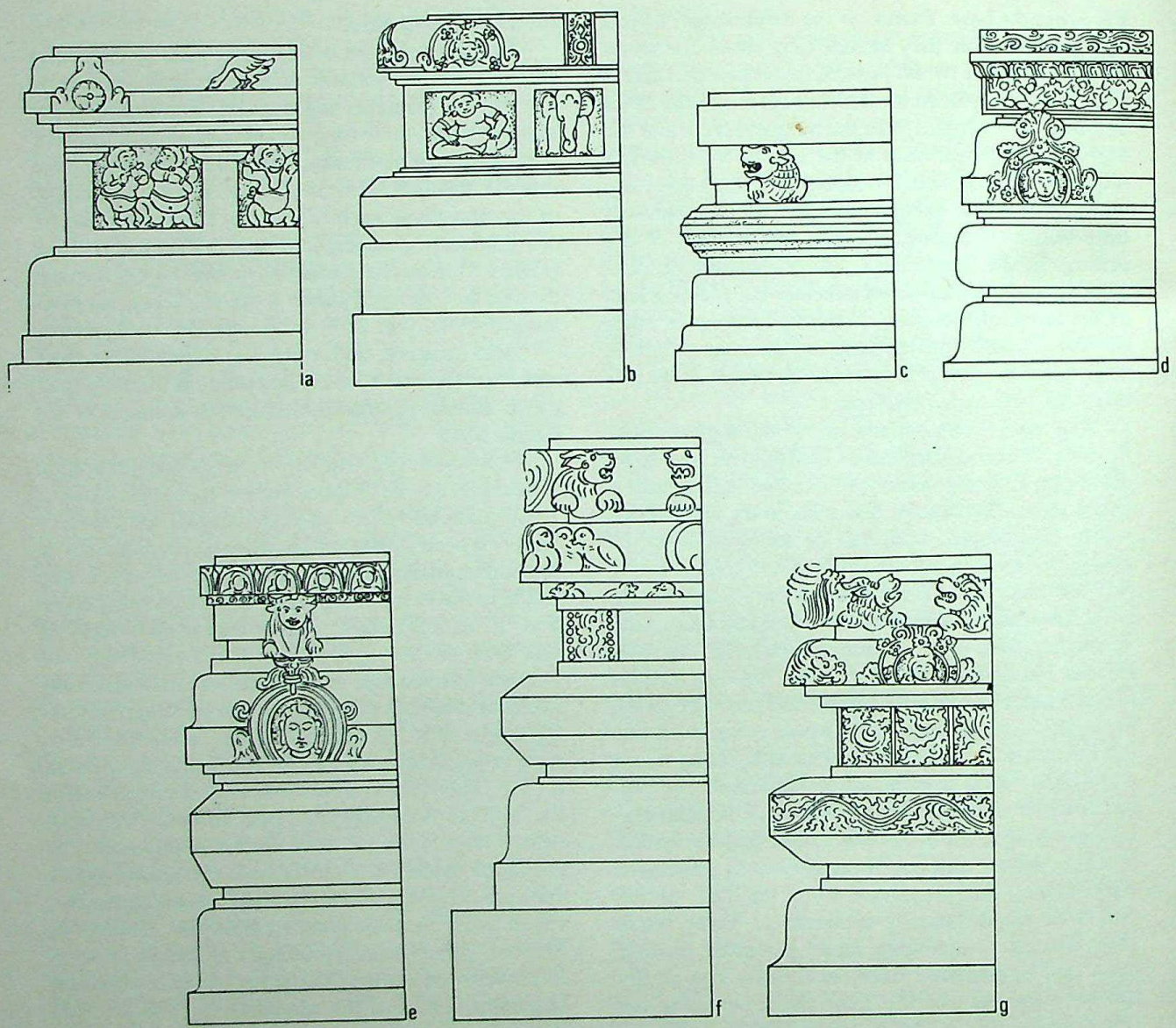

Figure 5. Early Calukya *adhiṣṭhāna* patterns: a. Bādāmi, Cave III, A.D. 578; b. Aihole, Meguṭi, A.D. 634/5; c. Bādāmi, Jambuliṅga, A.D. 699; d. Mahākūṭa, Mahākūteśvara, *c.* A.D. 720; e. Mahākūṭa, Mallikārjuna, *c.* A.D. 720; f. Paṭṭadakal, Saṅgameśvara (Vijayeśvara), A.D. 733/4; g. Paṭṭadakal, Virūpākṣa (Lokeśvara), A.D. 733/4-744/5 (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi).

a few years later than the temple's construction, though none is a dedication of the temple's consecration. It may be remembered that Fleet's unsuccessful attempt at translating the inscription of Puṭṭimaṇi-nāga suggested to him that it was the offering of the pillar it was placed on to the temple.[49]

CONCLUSION

It is thus possible to work out the sequence and chronology of the early Calukya architectural development on the basis of a combination of epigraphical and art historical evidence within the framework

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of an art historical interpretation. Epigraphical analysis offers critical historical moorings for the otherwise relative and hypothetical art historical interpretation. But, these moorings are available only within an artifactual or art historical interpretation. Ultimately it is full social historical analysis that takes all surviving evidence into consideration and allows the analyst to reach the most coherent and useful explanation. The evidence of epigraphy and art are intertwined complexly on both the level of style (palaeography and formal composition) and the level of content (reference to historical and iconographic subject matter). Their ultimate meaning is established on the level of an integrated interpretation of the history of a regional cultural tradition. The evidence of any particular temple form or inscription has little, if any, significance outside of its location within its historical tradition.

NOTES

1. George Michell, "Dating the Mahākūteśvara Temple at Mahakuta," *Oriental Art*, Vol. XXI (1975), pp. 242–251, lists 8 authors and 10 entries in Note 2, p. 251.

2. Gary Tarr, *The Architecture of the Early Western Chalukyas* (University of California at Los Angeles, Dissertation 1969, Ann Arbor 1970), pp. 86–88, 99–107, 228–248, 359, 525 offers the most extensive list available. (Tarr is an abridged version of Tartakov.)

3. Henry Cousens, *Chālukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, Vol. XLII, Calcutta 1926, pp. 51–52.

4. John Faithfull Fleet, "Sanskṛit and Old-Canarese Inscriptions, No. XCIV-XCVI," *I.A.*, Vol. X (1881), pp. 102–104; and "Sanskrit and Old Canarese Inscriptions, No. 185—Mahakuta Pillar Inscription of Mangalesa," *I.A.*, Vol. XIX (1890), pp. 7–20.

5. In this date and all other essentially epigraphical interpretations, I am accepting Fleet's conclusions, since they have not been challenged in print, and since I am not qualified to study them more critically.

6. Fleet, "Mahakuta Pillar Inscription," p. 20.

7. Gary Michael Tartakov, "The Beginning of Dravidian Temple Architecture in Stone," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XLII (1980), pp. 39–99.

8. Fleet, "Inscriptions No. XCIV–XCVI," p. 102.

9. C.K. Nagaraja Rao, "Chalukyan Queens," *The Chalukyas of Badami*, Bangalore 1978, pp. 159–169 (p. 160).

10. Fleet, "Mahakuta Pillar Inscription," p. 20.

11. Fleet, "Inscriptions No. XCIV–XCVI," p. 102.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

14. Cousens, *Cālukyan Architecture*, Pl. XXVII.

15. Pierre Rambach and Vitold DeGolish, *The Golden Age of Indian Art, Vth–XIIIth Century*, London 1955, p. 168.

16. George Michell, *Early Western Chalukyan Temples*, London 1975, drawing 8.

17. Pramod Chandra, "The Study of Indian Temple Architecture," *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, New Delhi 1975, p. 17, points out that Cousens had retired from the Archaeological Survey of India two decades earlier, and the work was probably written before that time. The latest citation in the volume is to a work of 1910.

18. Cousens, *Cālukyan Architecture*, p. 3.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 51–52.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

23. See the works cited in Notes 1, 2, 7, and 16, and Bolon's paper in this volume.

24. My measurements are based on Michell's plan, which has a different scale than the older Archaeological Survey of India plan. Carol Bolon's belief that the pillar was found elsewhere is based on a second hand report at least 60 years after it was removed from the site and a century after Fleet's visit. Bolon believes that around 1920 the column was located further north. (See her paper in this volume.) Though this would *not* preclude the explanation here of Fleet's report, or my observations of the site, it has two limitations. It is based on hearsay, 60 years after the time referred to, and the date offered seems to be as much as a decade after Cousens' report of the pillar's removal to Bijāpur.

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25. K.R. Srinivasan, "Southern Temples," *Archaeological Remains, Monuments & Museums*, New Delhi 1964, p. 198; Tarr, *Architecture of the Chalukyas*, pp. 86–88; Michell, *Early Western Chalukyan Temples*, p. 22 and Drawing 4. More detailed photographs in article cited in Note 7, Figs. 69–73.

26. 104 of these are described and discussed in Tarr, *Architecture of the Chalukyas*. I have since seen and been shown others by S. Rajasekhara, M.S. Nagaraja Rao and a great many by Carol Radcliffe Bolon.

27. Architectural terms here are those of Sanskrit texts for Dravidian structures.

28. This is the only *praṇāla* on a structure of the first phase.

29. Compare in particular measured drawings 4 and 5 in Michell, *Early Western Chalukyan Temples*.

30. Tartakov, "Beginnings of Dravidian Temple Architecture," Figs. 78–82.

31. *Ibid.*, Fig. 82.

32. Carol Radcliffe Bolon has given me this name.

33. Tarr, *Architecture of the Chalukyas*, pp. 228–248.

34. Cousens, pp. 61–66.

35. Michell, "Dating," is largely devoted to this proposition.

36. Fleet (1881); two others (?) are mentioned in *Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy 1928–9*, Nos. 284, 285.

37. Fleet, "Inscriptions No. XCIV–XCVI," p. 104.

38. I cannot accept George Michell's suggestion, "Dating," pp. 251–252, that this unusual ceiling structure reveals Pallava "influence." The roofing of the *maṇḍapa* with lintels running across rather than along the aisles and flat rather than sloping over the side aisles also occurs among some eighth-century Pallava structures. Though this is not a usual early Calukya structural form, there is no established Pallava tradition at this time from which it could be borrowed.

39. Fleet, "Inscriptions No. XCIV–XCVI," p. 104.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 103–104.

41. Compare in particular Michell, *Early Western Chalukyan Temples*, drawings 3 and 5.

42. S.C. Upadhyaya, "A Grant of the Western Chalukya Vijayaditya: Saka 653," *E.I.*, Vol. XXV, pp. 21–24 (p. 24).

43. John Faithfull Fleet, "Sanskrit and Old-Canarese Inscriptions, No. LXXVII," *I.A.* Vol. IX (1880), pp. 125–130, pp. 127 and 129.

44. Michell, "Dating," pp. 250–251.

45. Tartakov, "Beginnings of Dravidian Temple Architecture," Figs. 45–48.

46. Cousens, Pl. LI.

47. James C. Harle, "Le Temple de Naganatha à. Nagral," *Arts Asiatique*, Tome XIX (1969), Figs. 7–11.

48. Gary Michael Tartakov, "Reassembling an Early Calukya Vaiṣṇava Temple at Bādāmi," *Madhu: Recent Researches in Indian Archaeology and Art History*, Delhi 1981, pp. 179–183.

49. Fleet, "Inscriptions No. XCIV–XCVI," p. 104.

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25

The Mahākūṭa Column and Temples Reconsidered

CAROL RADCLIFFE BOLON

THE ASSOCIATION OF an elegant column (Plate 143) with the Mahākūṭeśvara temple (Plate 159) at the Early Western Calukya site of Mahākūṭa (Bijapur District, Karnataka) has been widely presumed.[1] The presumption has been made on the basis of the similar name of the god, Makuṭeśvaranātha, to whom the pillar records an increased land endowment, and because it was found lying near this temple (Figure 1). The pillar is inscribed with a date corresponding to 602 A.D. In the 1920s it was moved to the Bijapur Archaeological Museum.[2]

The question of this association is important because, if it were proved correct, art historians would know that temple architecture had become rather sophisticated in as early as 602 A.D., and the Mahākūṭeśvara temple would be among the earliest dated temples in south India.

In his monumental and widely read volume,[3] Henry Cousens first linked the pillar and temple, but he noted that the inscription does not actually mention the erection of a temple, and stated his opinion that the Mahākūṭeśvara temple must have been constructed before the erection of the pillar.[4] The pillar inscription and temple must now be considered in light of new evidence.

THE COLUMN

The column is beautifully proportioned and carved in a fine-grained, deep red sandstone (Plate 143). The faceted shaft is 1.75 m in circumference at the base and is 4.42 m tall. It bears sixteen lines of Sanskrit inscription, which read winding up from the base, written in old Kannaḍa script. It is crowned by a deeply ribbed *āmalaka* some 52 cm tall, on top of which is a rectangular box with foliate relief decoration. Something was originally morticed into the top, but is since dissociated. All together the pillar would stand about 5.18 m tall.

THE INSCRIPTION

The first ten lines of the inscription give the Calukya lineage record and thereafter read thus:[5]

> (Lines 11–12): And he (Maṅgaleśa), having set his heart on the conquest of the northern region and having conquered [Kalacuri King] Buddharāja, having confiscated [Buddharāja's] wealth, was eager to erect a column [symbolic] of his power on the bank of the Bhāgīrathī [Ganges]; having decided first, indeed, there should be erected a pillar of the victorious power of religion, he called on the royal lady named Durlabhadevī, his own father's wife [his stepmother], who is fit and worthy to follow his lead in the matter, who, like Damayantī, was a most devoted wife, who was the ornament of the Batpura family, and whose body had been purified by benefit of a variety of religious actions, and informed her of this assignment of authority [saying]:
>
> (Line 13): "The wealth of the Kalacuri clan has been expended in the image procession of the

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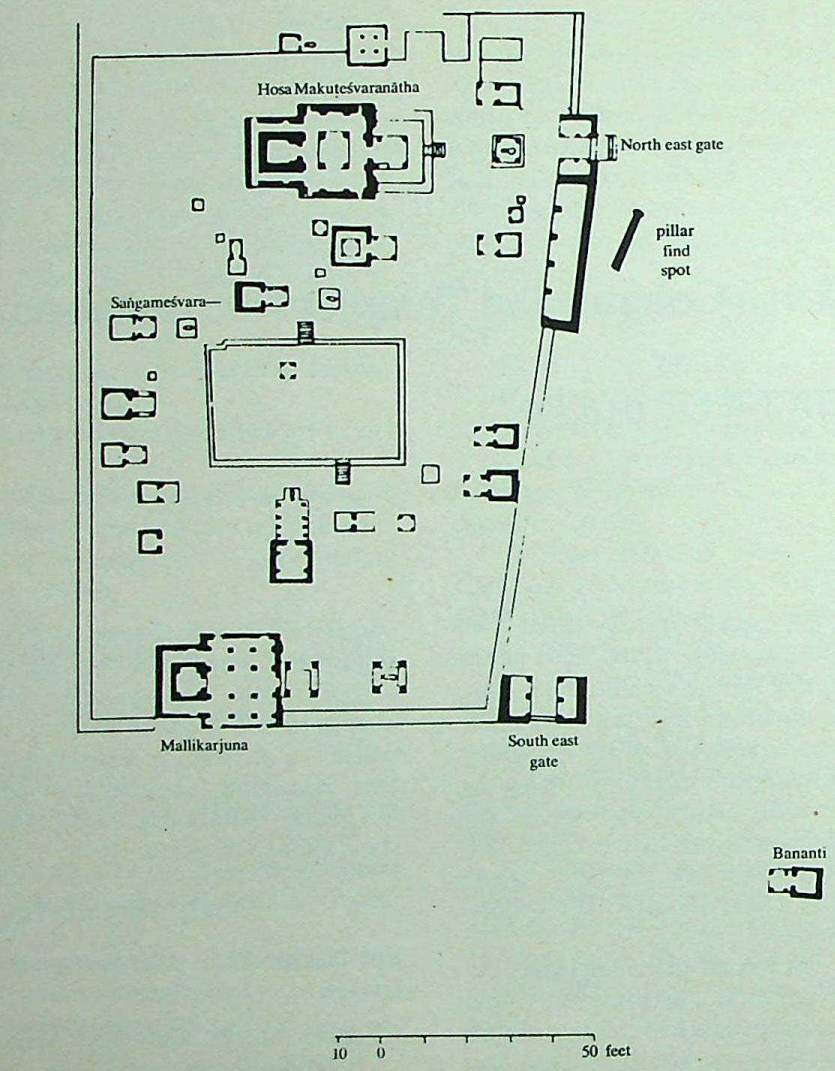

Figure 1. Mahākūṭa. Site map (adapted from H. Cousens).

temple of our own god, and [therefore] this property, which at their own image procession was assigned by our father [Pulikeśī I] and elder brother [Kīrtivarmā] to the god Makuteśvaranātha is supplemented by (bestowing) the enjoyment of the ten villages headed by Śrīaṁbāṭaka, Tirmmaridvenasavedve, Vrīhimukhagrāma [Paṭṭadakal, Kendur, Nandikeśvara]."

Line fifteen gives the date of the grant in Maṅgaleśa's fifth year of rule, Śaka Saṁvat 524, on a day corresponding to Thursday, April 12, 602 A.D. The inscription closes with the standard warning about breach of the grant provision.

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INTERPRETATION

The inscription can only be understood within the historical context. Maṅgaleśa was Vaiṣṇava himself, as were all early Calukya kings before 660 A.D. It seems that he took the Kalacuri booty and spent it on Vaiṣṇava ceremonies. Durlabhadevī, wife of Pulikeśī I, was Śaiva.[6] This reflects the practice of the Calukya kings of making political alliance through marriage to royal princesses from outside, even from Śaiva families. To be equitable, Maṅgaleśa made a bequest appropriately co-sponsored by his Śaiva stepmother, Durlabhadevī, of revenues from land of ten villages to Śiva Makuṭeśvaranātha. It was made as a supplement to the earlier assignment of this wealth to the same god by Pulikeśī and Kīrtivarmā. The pillar itself was intended to commemorate his act of piety—the grant of land—for which the grantor would "enjoy happiness in heaven for 60,000 years."[7]

I stress the fact that this was a proclamation pillar recording a land endowment supplemental to one made by Pulikeśī and Kīrtivarmā between *c.* 565 and 597 at the latest, since that date marks the end of Kīrtivarmā's reign. It is significant to note that the pillar inscription does not mention the erection or dedication of a temple. One would expect, however, that the funds accrued from the initial grant by Pulikeśī and Kīrtivarmā could have been used to erect a temple even in the last quarter of the sixth century, and that temple might have been constructed on the land granted. The question is: Could the earliest temple have been the well-known Mahākūṭeśvara temple?

MAHĀKŪṬEŚVARA TEMPLE

Examining the large Mahākūṭeśvara temple (Plate 159) on the north side of the Makuṭa compound, I am not comfortable dating the temple as early in the seventh century as 600, as its association with the pillar date would require. Following the end of the Calukya cave excavation phase in *c.* 578, it seems that other temples much simpler than the Mahākūṭeśvara temple, such as a small temple by the Aihoḷe Śiva cave (Plate 160) or the Makuṭa Bāṇanti temple (Plate 161), would represent an early stage in masonry architecture.[8] The temple at Bādāmi called the "Upper Śivālaya," which actually is a Viṣṇuite temple, is more developed than these, but is still less sophisticated architecturally and sculpturally than the Makuṭa temple. Its niches, for example, are filled with narrative reliefs (Plate 163) carved in a style which seems naive when compared with the iconic images of the Mahākūṭeśvara temple niches (Plate 164). Even compared to the Aihole Jaina temple (Meguṭi) dated 634 A.D. by inscription, even considering only the original portion of that temple (Plate 162), one finds that it is a more modest temple with simpler base. Its two small windows, without frame or design, are elementary compared to those of the Mahākūṭeśvara temple.

The architectural sophistication of the Mahākūṭeśvara temple has been discussed by others.[9] The temple has a Nandī *maṇḍapa*, an open (now enlarged) four-pillar porch, a *maṇḍapa*, and an enclosed sanctum housing a *svyambhū liṅga*, with circumambulatory passage.[10] The temple *adhiṣṭhāna* is tall and includes a frieze of *Rāmāyaṇa* episodes with figures carved in high relief, well modelled and as refined as the Śaiva niche-*mūrtis* which adorn the temple wall (Plate 165).

An interesting detail is the presence of the river goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā on their characteristic *vāhanas* on the sanctum doorway base-boxes (Plates 166 and 167). The fact that these are clearly river goddesses on their respective mounts is evidence that the temple must date to the reign of Vinayāditya at the earliest, because it was his son Vijayāditya who first brought the images of the river goddesses to the Calukya kingdom from the north while he was still crown prince.[11] In the Jamalagāma copper-plate grant issued by Vijayāditya in his first regnal year, 697/7, he recounts deeds he performed while crown prince: Between 681 and 696 he battled in the north and defeated his enemies, taking from them a cloth banner or pennant bearing Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and the pot, and also took two large drums, rubies, and elephants.[12] Fleet read a defective lettering in the Nerūr plates as *"paḍa"* which he took as Sanskrit and translated as "token." All other copies read *"paḍa,"* which is not Sanskrit, but Prakrit for *"paṭṭa"* or cloth. *"Gaṅgā-Yamunā Pāḷidhvajapaḍa"* would be cloth banners painted with auspicious images of the river goddesses and the pot. These banners had been carried into the battle by the northern enemy and were captured by Vijayāditya as a trophy, along with the other objects.[13]

In fact, of the approximately one hundred and ten surviving early Calukya temples, those which could be placed before 681 A.D. judging from architectural, sculptural, and inscriptional evidence, do not bear

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the river goddesses, while they are present on those which would seem to follow 681 A.D.[14] Their presence on the Mahākūṭeśvara temple suggests the temple may have been built during Vinayāditya's reign, *c.* 681–696.

HIRE MAKUṬEŚVARANĀTHA

If the Mahākūṭeśvara temple is not to be accepted as one of the earliest of Calukya temples, art historians are left seeking the beginnings of Calukya temple architecture. There is a small temple (Plate 168) about a quarter of a mile up the hill from the Makuṭa compound toward Bādāmī (Figure 1), just off the paved *rājapatha* which may have connected Bādāmī with Makuṭa since Calukya times. This temple is called *Hire* or *Haḷe* (elder or old in Kannaḍa) Makuṭeśvaranātha.[15] It stands beneath the crown (makuṭa) of a rock out-cropping under a cliff. The overhanging cliff and mountain shape was certainly the inducement for placing the temple here. It acts as a mountain-*śikhara* for the otherwise flat-roofed temple. The coincidence of the name and the presence of the crown-like mountain suggest that this may be the original old temple, built with early funds gathered from the land granted by Pulikeśī and Kīrtivarmā for Śiva Makuṭeśvaranātha. One would readily accept its extreme architectural simplicity for a temple built between *c.* 565 and 600 A.D. It is 4.26 m wide and 4.57 m long, faces east, is windowless, and had an open, pillared porch. The pillars now lie nearby and are eight-sided with pot and foliage base and capital, and shaft bands carved with *grāsamukha*, pearl swags, and foliage cut in a manner reminiscent of the Bādāmī cave carving (Plate 169). The interior is an open *maṇḍapa* plan with four pillars and no enclosed sanctum (Plate 170).[16] The *pīṭha* of the cult image stood in the center of the space and may have supported a *liṅga*. A now fragmentary early Calukya image of Mahiṣamardinī lies loose inside the temple (Plate 171). This figure cannot definitely be associated with the temple. This temple-within-the-mountain, a kind of "structural cave," might be considered the logical architectural intermediate step between cave temple and structural temple with *śikhara*. Perhaps this temple was already standing on the land granted by Pulikeśī and Kīrtivarmā when Maṅgaleśa erected the pillar proclaiming his supplemental grant in 602.

In essence these three early kings seem to have established a Śaivite trust which Maṅgaleśa recorded in stone. The revenue from the original and supplemental land granted to Makuṭeśvaranātha would have enriched the treasury as taxes accrued over the years. Money drawn from this fund could be used to finance another temple.

CONCLUSION

Although the large Mahākūṭeśvara temple may not predate 602 A.D., it may have been financed by the source recorded in the Makuṭa pillar. It is my belief that the revenues of the granted land were gathered over a period of about sixty years (disrupted between 642 and 654 A.D. due to Pallava conquest of the dynasty) during which time the Calukya kings continued to be Vaiṣṇava. After restoring Calukya rule in 654 A.D., King Vikramāditya underwent conversion to Śaivism in 660 A.D., which is known from the record of his payment for Śivamaṇḍala *dīkṣā* in the Āmudālapāḍu copper-plate grant.[17] After this important event major Śaiva temples could be built. The compound of the Mahākūṭeśvara temple is locally known as *Hosa* (new in Kannada) Mahākūṭa. The Mahākūṭeśvara temple may have been the second temple at Makuṭa dedicated to the god Śiva Makuṭeśvaranātha, Hire Makuṭeśvara having been the first.

One or two villages was the standard imperial Calukya grant to a Brahmin or an official, or to a temple.[18] The Makuṭa pillar grant of a total of eleven land lots to Makuṭeśvaranātha is very rich. Its revenues, as they constantly accrued, may have been used to finance both the old Makuṭeśvara temple and the new Makuṭeśvara temple. The funds also may have been used to finance other temples such as the Cikkamahākūṭa apsidal Śiva temple about a mile from Makuṭa,[19] the Mallikārjuna temple at Makuṭa[20] and perhaps other Śaiva temples at Makuṭa.

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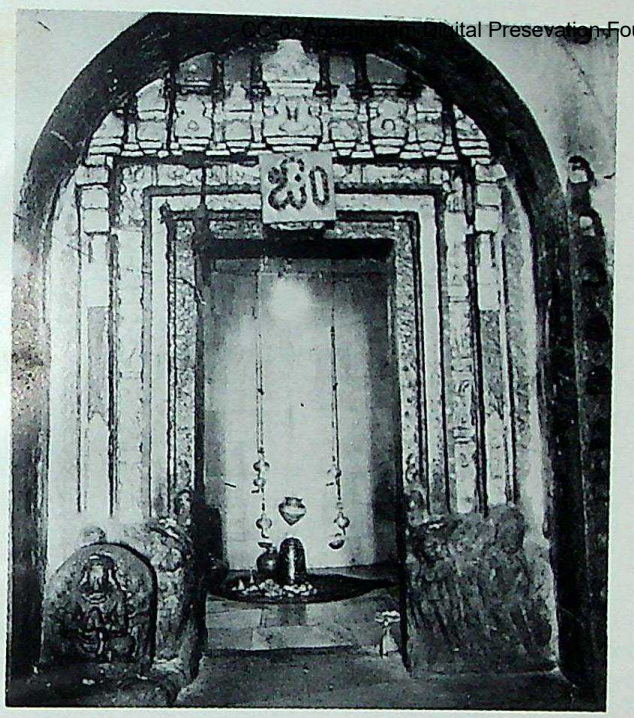

Plate 166. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, sanctum doorway.

Plate 167. Mahākūṭa. Mahākūṭeśvara temple, sanctum doorway base-box figures.

Plate 168. Mahākūṭa. Hire Makūṭeśvara temple, view from east. Early Calukya. *c.* A.D. 575-600.

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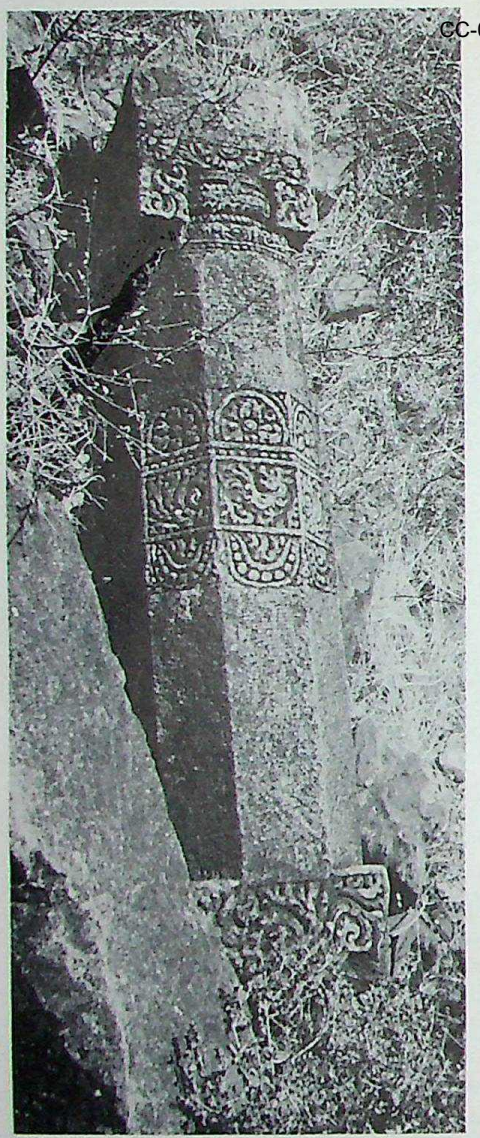

Plate 169. Mahākūṭa. Hire Makūṭeśvara temple, porch pillar.

Plate 170. Mahākūṭa. Hire Makūṭeśvara temple, interior.

Plate 171. Mahākūṭa. Loose Mahiṣamardinī fragment. Early Western Calukya. *c.* 6th-7th century. A.D.

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NOTES

1. For a listing of those who have so presumed, refer to G. Michell, "Dating the Mahākuṭeśvara Temple at Mahakuṭa," *Oriental Art*, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (1975), p. 251, *infra* 2. The modern site name Mahākūṭa seems to be a corruption of the original name Makuṭa found in an inscription on a pillar of the Mahākūṭeśvara (or Makuṭeśvara) temple, as discussed by J.F. Fleet, *I.A.*, Vol. X (1881), p. 104; and *I.A.*, Vol. XIX (1890), p. 7.

2. A Mahākūṭa trustee told me he saw the pillar lying just outside the east gate and a few meters to the south before it was moved to Bijapur. This clarifies the confused directions reported by Fleet, *I.A.*, Vol. X, p. 102, and Vol. 19, pp. 7–8.

3. H. Cousens, *The Chālukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts*, Archaeological Survey of India, NIS, Vol. XLII, Calcutta 1926.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

5. This reading varies from Fleet's only on word choice. My interpolations are within brackets. *See* Fleet, *I.A.*, Vol. XIX, pp. 7–20.

6. For an explanation of this spelling of Pulikēśī as a hybrid Kannada and Sanskrit name *see I.A.*, Vol. XIX, p. 14; for Calukya, p. 13 thereof.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 20, line 15.

8. Gary Tartakov, "The Beginnings of Dravidian Architecture in Stone," *Artibus Asiae,* Vol. XLII, No. 1 (1980), pp. 39–99; mentions these as early temples.

9. For discussion of Mahākūṭeśvara temple's architecture *see* Michell, "Dating the Mahākuṭeśvara Temple," and G. Tarr (Tartakov), "The Architecture of the Early Western Chalukyas," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles 1969, pp. 100–104.

10. The Nandī image in the *Nandī-maṇḍapa* may be that granted here in 933 A.D. by Bappuvarasa as recorded in an inscription on a pillar of Mahākūṭeśvara temple; *I.A.*, Vol. XVIII (1889), p. 317. Stylistically that date is suitable.

11. *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 313. Noted by Tarr (Tartakov), "Architecture of the Early Western Chalukyas," p. 12, Note 13 in the Rāyagaḍ copperplate grant. The information is repeated in the following plates: Nerūr of 701 and 705/6 and another undated, of Vijayāditya's reign, *I.A.*, Vol. IX; Kendūr of 750, *E.I.*, Vol. IX; and Vokkaleri of 757, *E.I.*, Vol. V.

12. Iḷangō Aḍigal, *Śilappadikāram,* translated by Alain Danielou, New York, 1965, Book III, Canto 27, p. 180, describes pennants on the chariots of the enemy.

13. In this reading I agree with K. Venkatrayacharya, "A Note on Pāḷidhvaja," *Journal of the Institute of Indian Studies*, (Udupi), Vol. I, No. 1 (May 1978). *Pāḷi* is listed as meaning pot by Monier Willians, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford 1899.

14. For discussion *see* C. Radcliffe, "Early Western Chalukya Sculpture," Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University 1980.

15. The existence of the temple was first mentioned to me by Dr. A. Sundara, Department of Ancient History and Epigraphy, Karnatak University. The name was related by Mahākūṭa Trustees, Śrī B.M. Horakeri and Śrī B.V. Janali. Fleet (*I.A.*, Vol. X, p. 102, *infra* 1), mentioned that he was told there was another, older Makuṭa, but he did not look for it.

16. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Buddhist and Hindu*, third edition, Bombay 1971, pp. 52–53, mentioned that he thought the earliest temple form in Calukya country to have been the *maṇḍapa* type descended from the *santhāgāra* or village meeting hall plan. Other Calukya temples with this type plan are Sandūr, Pārvatī temple and Aihoḷe, Lāḍ Khān.

17. N. Ramesan, ed., *Copper Plate Inscriptions in the Andhra Pradesh Government Museum*, Hyderabad, 1962, p. 54.

18. An example of the latter is a record inscribed on a porch pillar of Mahākūṭeśvara temple of a gift to the temple by Vijayāditya's concubine, Vināpoṭigaḷ, of a pedestal of rubies and a silver umbrella made for the image (in this instance *liṅga*) and a grant of a field for its support. *See* Fleet, *I.A.*, Vol. X. p. 103.

19. Cikkamahākūṭa is also called Haḷe Mahākūṭa. The apsidal Śiva temple there may be dated early in the seventh century.

20. Mallikārjuna temple repeats architectural elements of the large Makuṭeśvara temple with variations and advances in its planning and a different sculptor. It may have been built soon after the Makuṭeśvara temple.

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26

Telī-kā-Mandir, Gwalior

KRISHNA DEVA

THE LOFTY Telī-kā-mandir temple (Plates 172–174) situated in the hill fort at Gwalior (*anc.* Gopagiri) is an architectural landmark. The temple, with an exceptional plan and design, is about 27.43 m high. It comprises a rectangular *garbhagṛha* (9.14 m×4.87 m internally) with an enormous *miśraka* superstructure showing a Valabhī *śikhara* (wagon-vault roof) over a Nāgara body and a *kapilī*-projection (4.82 m×3.91 m internally), and an imposing main doorway (10.66 m high), approached by a flight of steps. The temple faces east and has a tall plinth.

This monument is remarkable for its bold ornamentation, rhythmic proportions and its classical quality of ornament and judicious distribution of plain and carved surface which may have inspired H. Goetz to call it "the last masterpiece of Gupta art."[1] Goetz also suggested that the temple was built by Yaśovarmā of Kanauj (*c.* A.D. 725–750) towards the very end of his reign, long after he was defeated in *c.* 731 by Lalitāditya of Kashmir, who occupied Kanauj and obliged Yaśovarmā to settle in Gwalior as a friendly vassal. According to Goetz, this temple served as a "royal court temple during Yaśovarmā's life and a funeral monument after his death." Goetz also identified the river goddesses (Plate 175) and her female attendants as his queens and an accompanying male figure as prince Āma. While some of his suggestions are too fanciful, Goetz revealed a rare insight in attributing the temple to the mid-eighth century and to Yaśovarmā.

An eighth-century date for the temple is confirmed by four short inscriptions, two engraved on the right jamb of the niche on the southeast *karṇa* of the south face and two on the wall of the niche of the south *kapilī*. The first two yield names of pilgrims (Plate 176), while of the remaining two, one is more significant, providing a quarter of a metrical hymn. The inscriptions read as follows:

1. *Śrī-Maharadeva ja sarvva*
2. *Nā sīṅgha ha*
   Nāgasīṅgha
3. *Oṁ namaḥ so*
4. *Namaḥ Vāṇāgrāśakra (sakta)—nettrā valita—di(dṛ)ḍha—bhujā cakra—sū (śū)lāsi*

All the inscriptions are beautifully engraved in a calligraphic script, more so the last one (Plate 177) which is also important for providing the iconography of goddess (Durgā) in a hymn, composed in the *kāvya* style in the Sragdharā metre but engraved by a scribe who has misspelt several Sanskrit words. The hymn refers to goddess (Durgā) as having focused her eyesight on the arrow-tip, having bent her strong arm and (holding) *cakra*, *śūla* and sword (among her attributes). Significantly the form of Durgā shooting arrow referred to in the hymn is known in south India and the Deccan during seventh-eighth centuries, as in the Mahiṣamardinī cave at Mahābalipuram (*c.* A.D. 650),[2] the Mallikārjuna temple at Paṭṭaḍakal (c. A.D. 740),[3] and the Pratolī of the Kailāsa cave at Ellorā (*c.* A.D. 755).[4] There are also a number of short graffiti specifying directions, engraved on the *vedībandha*

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courses. Three such graffiti read *pachīma*, one reads *utara*, two read *vāyava*, one reads *dakṣi* and four read *neṛtya* with a variant *naṛti*. Except for one graffito each reading *pachīma* and *vāyava*, they are all placed in the appropriate directions and seem to have been masons' marks. Besides these, there are two lines of long inscriptions painted in red ochre on the niche of the north *bhadra*, which are quite illegible.

The palaeography of these inscriptions is close to the Indragadh inscription of Naṇṇappa dated A.D. 710[5] and the Mangraon inscription of Viṣṇugupta[6] of the later Gupta dynasty, assignable to the first half of the eighth century.

This temple employs art-motifs which characterise the monuments of Madhyadeśa and Daśārṇa during the seventh-eighth centuries. These include the course of *tulā*-ends bearing *siṁhamukhas* (Plate 178) above the framed niche (first encountered at the Muṇḍeśvarī temple[7] dated A.D. 636), Rucaka pilasters adorned with *ghaṭapallava* on the base and the capital, the latter showing several other motifs terminating with a *ghaṇṭamālā* festoon with a long suspended chain with bell (first seen in the Śiva temple 2 at Mahuā[8] of *c.* 650–675) and Gaṅgā/Yamunā carved on the lower part of the doorframe (Plates 174 and 175) surmounted by an adoring *nāga* and a pair of *haṁsas* carrying a *mālā* in their beaks (first occurrence in the Śiva temple 2 at Mahuā and also at Āmrol[9] and Naresar[10]). The doorframe of four to five *śākhās* including the *nāgaśākhā* with the tail-ends of the *nāgas* (frequently represented like a date-palm) held in the hands of a flying Garuḍa forming the *lalāṭa-bimba* (Plates 174 and 178) was also perhaps introduced at the Śiva temple 2 at Mahuā and continued in this and other temples of the eighth century. This is one of the earliest temples to employ exaggerated *tribhaṅga* (most conspicuous on its figure of Viṣṇu as Trivikrama), which indeed appears to be a trait of the eighth century.

A similar date is to be assigned to the *ihāmṛgas* (Figure 180) with luxurious, swirling scroll-like tails depicted above the figural niches of its *vedībandha* and to the floral motifs carved on the oft-repeated courses of the *tūla*-ends as also to the pair of large lotus blossoms adorning the heavy Rucaka engaged columns and pilasters in the interior of the sanctum (Figure 179). Thus like palaeography, the sculptural and architectural style also suggests an eighth century date for this monument.

The cumulative evidence of palaeography and art style thus vouch for a date towards the middle of the eighth century for Telī-kā-mandir.[11] If this is accepted, there is no difficulty in attributing this magnificent temple to Yaśovarmā of Kanauj (*c.* 725–750), who was known to be a powerful potentate according to the joint testimony of epigraphs[12] and literary works—contemporary and late Brahmanical[13] and later Jaina.[14] Yaśovarmā indeed continued to wield influence even after his defeat and occupation of his capital town, Kanauj, by Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa of Kashmir. The Jaina tradition is persistent in glorifying prince Āma (*c.* 750–800), son and successor of Yaśovarmā, as a devout patron of Jaina saints and religion and a builder of Jaina temples at Gopagiri (Gwālior), Kānyakubja (Kanauj) and Mathura. Some Jaina images of *c.* eighth century have survived in the Gwālior fort[15] to suggest the existence at the site of Jaina shrine(s). Moreover, coeval Jaina images as well as architectural remains have been identified at the neighboring ancient site of Āmrol[16] (derivable from *Āmra-pura*), which might well have been founded by prince Āma. It is not without significance that the temple closest in sculptural and architectural style to the Telī-kā-mandir is the Rāmeśvara Mahādeva temple at Āmrol, which, though much smaller and with a normal *nāgara śikhara*, was seemingly built by a guild related to the one which constructed the Teli-kā-mandir.

NOTES

1. H. Goetz, "The Last Masterpiece of Gupta Art," *Art and Letters*, Vol. XXIX (1955), pp. 47–59.

2. K.R. Srinivasan, *Cave-temples of the Pallavas*, Delhi 1964, Pl. XLVII.

3. AIIS Varanasi Centre, Neg. No. 151.38.

4. Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. II, New York 1964, Pl. 210.

5. Krishna Deva, "Indragadh Inscription of Nannappa, VS 767," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXII (1957–58), pp. 112–117.

6. A.S. Altekar, "Mangraon Inscription of the Time of Vishṇugupta, Year 17," *E.I.*, Vol. XXVI (1941–42), pp. 241–246.

7. *Vide* my paper in this volume on "Muṇḍeśvarī

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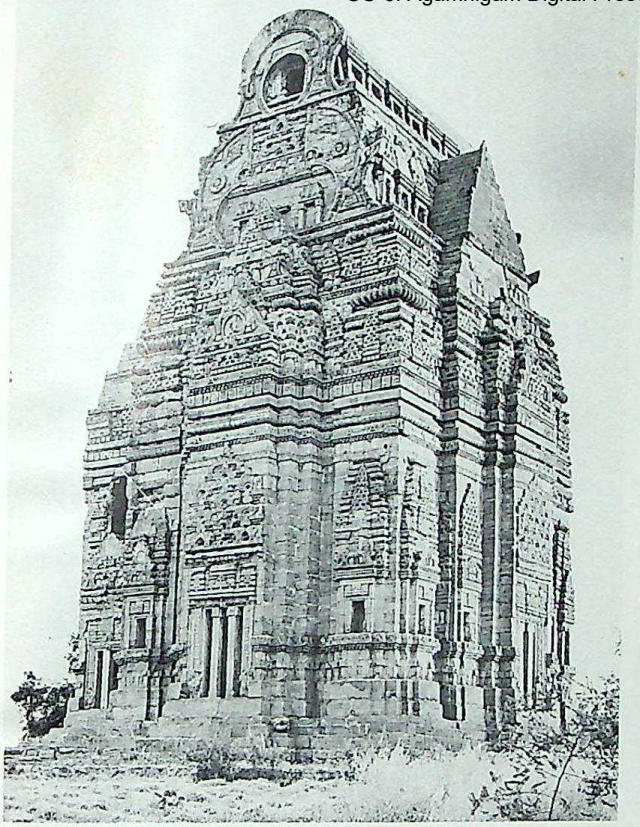

Plate 172. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, general view from the northwest, Daśārṇa-Gopādri style, *c.* A.D. 750. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 173. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, general view from the south. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

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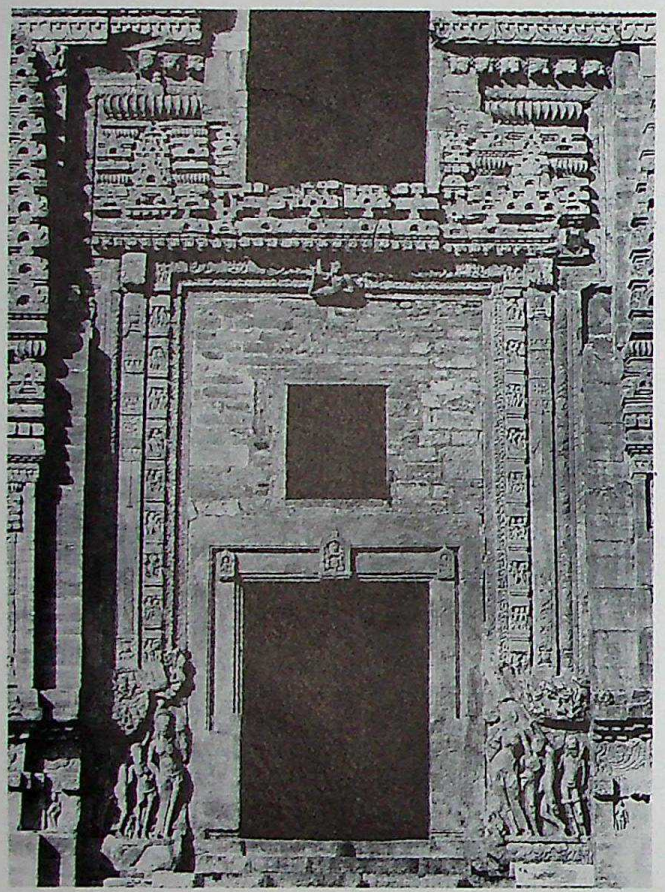

Plate 174. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, main doorway (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

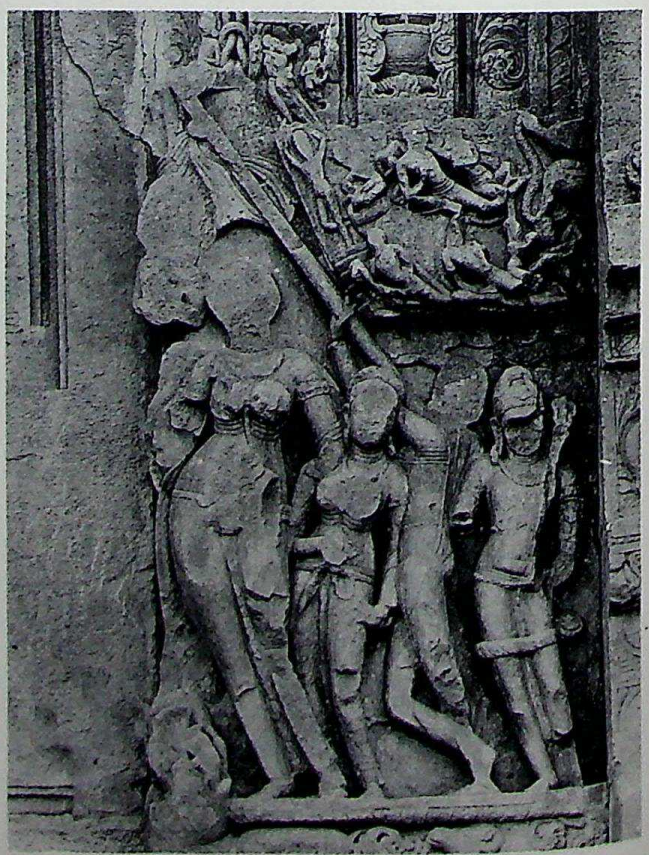

Plate 175. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, main doorway, right jamb showing Gaṅgā and attendants (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

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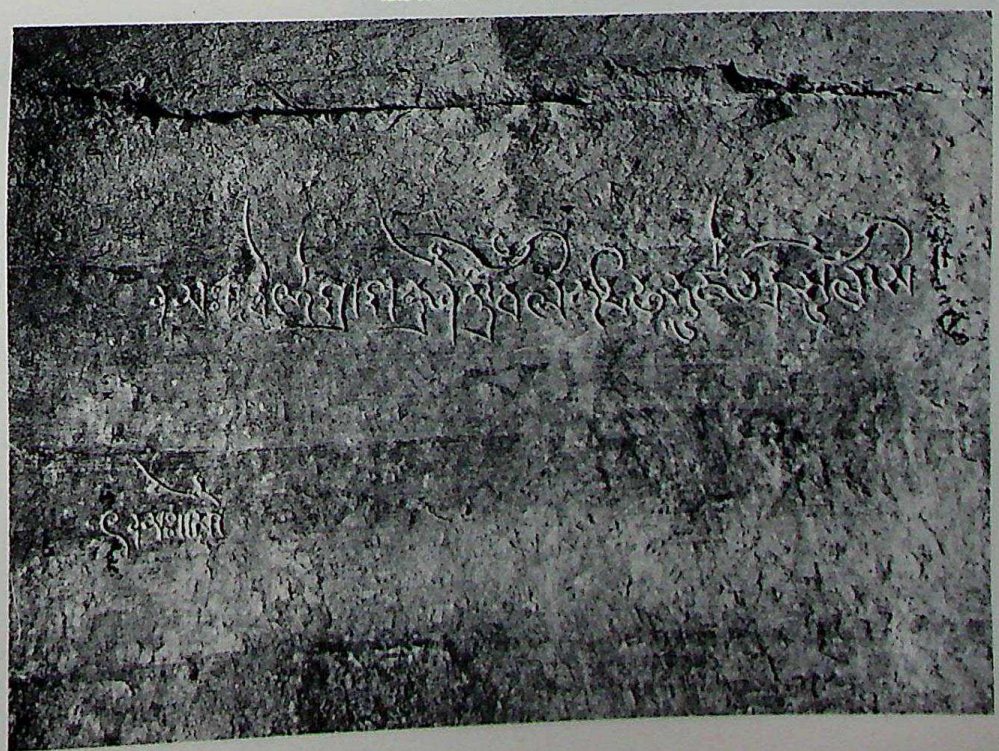
Plate 176. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, south face, pilgrim inscriptions in southeast *karṇa* niche. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 177. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, south face, inscription in *kapilī* niche. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)



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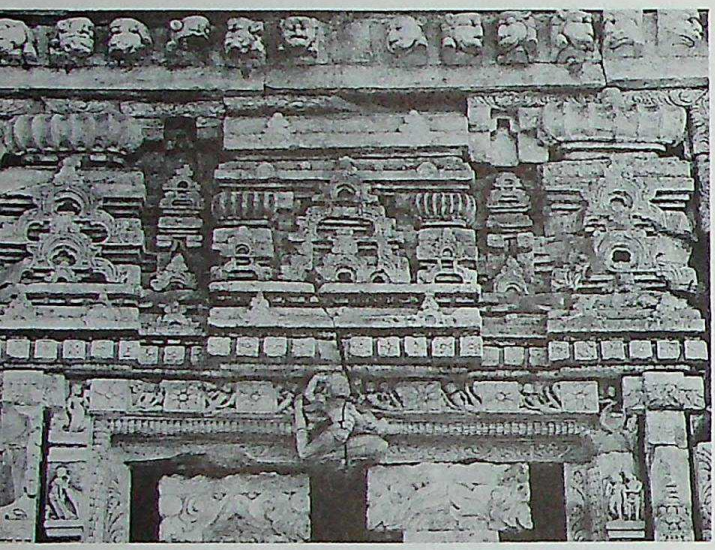

Plate 178. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, west wall, decoration above the *bhadra* niche. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

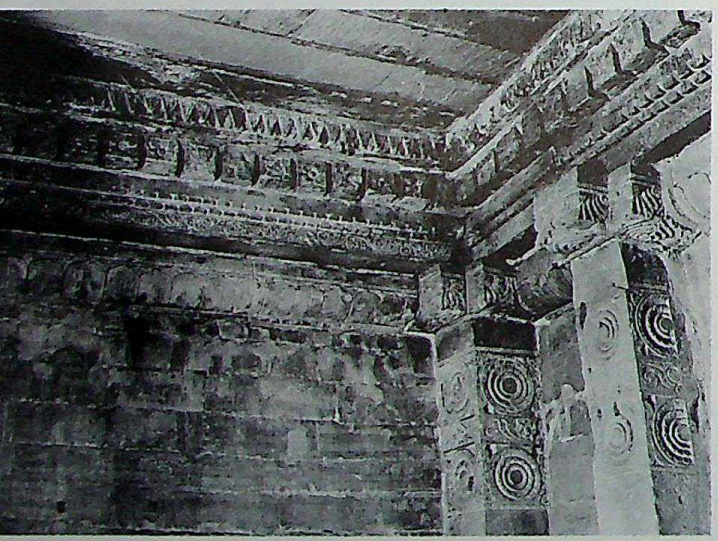

Plate 179. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, sanctum interior, details of cornice and pilasters.

Plate 180. Gwalior. Telī-kā-mandir, east face, detail of two *ihāmṛgas* on the *vedibandha*. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

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Temple, Rāmgarh."

8. Krishna Deva, *Temples of North India*, New Delhi 1969, p. 22.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

11. I am revising my own dating of the temple, which I had previously assigned to *c.* 850. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

12. Hiranand Sastri, "Nalanda Stone Inscription of the Reign of Yasovarmmadeva," *E.I.*, Vol. XX (1929–30), pp. 37–46.

13. *Gauḍavaho* by Vākpati (dated second quarter of the 8th century), vv. 99–737; *Rājataraṇgiṅī* by Kalhaṇa (dated A.D. 1148–1149), IV, vv. 132–146.

14. (i) *Prabhāvakacarita* (Bombay 1909) by Prabhāchandra Sūri (dated A.D. 1277).

(ii) *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* (Singhi Series, Santiniketan 1933) by Merutuṇga (dated A.D. 1305), p. 123.

(iii) *Vividhatīrthakalpa* (Singhi Series, Santiniketan 1934) by Jinaprabha Sūri (dated A.D. 1332), p. 19.

(iv) *Prabandhakośa* (Singhi Series, Santiniketan 1935) by Rājaśekhara Sūri (dated A.D. 1348), pp. 26–46; and

(v) *Purātanaprabandhasaṅgraha* (Singhi Series, Santiniketan 1936), p. 98 (from manuscript *P.* copied in A.D. 1472).

15. M.W. Meister, "Āma, Amrol and Jainism in Gwalior Fort," *Journal of Oriental Institute*, Baroda, Vol. XXII (1972), pp. 354–358.

16. *Ibid.*

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27

The Śaṅkaragaṇa Panel in the Sagar University Art Museum

DONALD M. STADTNER

AN EXAMINATION of an inscribed sculptural panel (Plate 181) in the Sagar University art museum can provide a partial understanding of a little known phase of central Indian art that preceded the rise of full-fledged medieval art. The panel, which bears four figures and a donative inscription, probably can be assigned to the second half of the eighth century.[1] The work has wide significance, since it is possible to relate the sculpture of the panel to images from a number of sites to the east of Sagar in Madhya Pradesh, notably to those at Nānd-Cānd (Panna District). The piece was part of one of the four kiosks that were constructed during the late nineteenth century from sculptural fragments that were probably collected in Sagar itself or in its vicinity.[2] The kiosks were dismantled in the mid-1950s, and the images were transferred to the newly formed art museum at the University of Sagar.[3]

The five-lined inscription is contained on a wide projecting band that is placed directly over the figures. Based upon the palaeography of the record, it has been assigned to the middle or perhaps to the third quarter of the eighth century.[4] After a short invocation to Śiva, the record refers to the reign of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka mahārājādhirāja parameśvara* Śaṅkaragaṇadeva who is described as meditating upon the feet of Vāmarājadeva, who is accorded the same imperial titles. The donor of the panel, Kṛṣṇādevī of the Loṇiya family, was wedded to Deuka, a *parameśvara* of Kaśapura belonging to the family of Kalāireya. The object of the inscription is to record an unspecified meritorious work (*kīrti*) that was undertaken on behalf of the donor's mother and father.

Mirashi has identified Vāmarāja and Śaṅkaragaṇa as two early kings belonging to the Kalachuri Dynasty of Tripurī, but this identification has been rightly challenged by D.C. Sircar.[5] It seems likely that Vāmarāja and Śaṅkaragaṇa were rulers of a short-lived dynasty about which little else is known. The only other reference to this same Śaṅkaragaṇa occurs in a short stone inscription from Choṭī Deorī (Jabalpur District) that records a dedication of the granary.[6] This inscription indicates that the territory under control of Śaṅkaragaṇa probably extended from at least the Sagar region to Choṭī Deorī, a distance of about one hundred and thirty kilometers. Choṭī Deorī is no more than twenty kilometers from Nānd-Cānd, and this proximity is another reason for associating the sculpture of Nānd-Cānd with territory under the control of Śaṅkaragaṇa.

Mirashi has identified the two large figures of the panel as Kṛṣṇadevī's mother and father, and the small female figure between them as the donor herself (Plate 181). Portraiture is uncommon in Indian art, and this idealized representation ranks as one of the more important examples from central India. The large male and female figures are shown out of

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proportion to the small donor figure as well as to the horse and the male figure above the horse, probably a groom. The large male figure clasps his hands together, while the right hand of the large female figure is placed upon the head of the standing female by her side. The composition of the slab is rigidly frontal, and the figures are represented as quite stiff, with the exception of the horse that has one leg raised, and the groom, who seems to hold tightly the reins. Each of the figures is deeply cut from the surface of the red sandstone slab. The central male figure has a small broken protrusion beneath his chin that certainly represents a beard. His headdress is a bulbous turban fastened by a thin band placed above his forehead. A segment of the turban, or perhaps a wide tuft of hair, falls asymmetrically from behind the turban over the figure's left shoulder.

NĀND-CĀND

The ancient remains at Nānd-Cānd are situated about one kilometer to the east of the village and are centered around a reconstructed Śaiva shrine known as the Mṛtaṅgeśvara temple.[7] This temple is composed of sculptural and architectural fragments belonging to a number of temples whose foundations have disappeared. The site was visited first by Alexander Cunningham and then seems to have escaped subsequent notice. During the ancient period, the site witnessed at least two separate periods of artistic activity. The earliest probably dates to the late Gupta period, or perhaps to *c.* 500–550 A.D., and is represented by an incomplete *mātṛkā* group (Plates 182–184) of outstanding quality.[8] The second period, which was far more prolific, is best represented by another incomplete *mātṛkā* group; and it is this group of images that forms the closest parallels with the Śaṅkaragaṇa panel.

Only five of the original *mātṛkās* are extant (Vaiṣṇavī, Maheśvarī, Indrāṇī, Brahmāṇī and Kaumārī); these are now placed in the open on the north side of Mṛtaṅgeśvara temple.[9] According to Cunningham's description, these *mātṛkās* and other Brahmanical images were discovered in the vicinity of "a long row of small ruined temples . . ." located to the southeast of the Mṛtaṅgeśvara temple on the western bank of a tank that no longer exists. Like the figures of the Śaṅkaragaṇa panel, each of the *mātṛkās* is portrayed in a rigidly frontal manner, and each image is deeply cut away from the plain background (Plates 182 and 183). The rounded face of each of the *mātṛkās* is also reminiscent of the figures contained on the Śaṅkaragaṇa panel. The skirt on a Durgā image at Nānd-Cānd is nearly identical to that of the female figure on the Sagar panel (Plate 184). Moreover, the thin waistband of the central figure is identical to those found both on the *mātṛkās* and on the Durgā image at Nānd-Cānd.

At Nānd-Cānd also are a number of architectural fragments such as exterior wall panels and lintels and jambs which are probably contemporary with the *mātṛkās*. Additional architectural fragments and images that can be associated with this phase of central Indian art are located in the northern part of Jabalpur District at sites such as Bahuriband, Bilhari, Bargaon, Tigowā and Choṭī Deorī. The origins of this style or its precise boundaries are not certain, but it is clear that the surviving work should be considered a distinct mode within the art of central India during the eighth and early ninth centuries. Although the history of the dynasty to which Śaṅkaragaṇa belonged is known only from the short inscription of the Sāgar panel and the stone record from Choṭī Deorī, the royal family held sway over the region in which this style flourished. By the second half of the ninth century the area controlled by Śaṅkaragaṇa, or at least that part of his realm in the vicinity of Nānd-Cānd and Choṭī Deorī, had probably fallen into the hands of Kalacuri Dynasty of Tripuri. One of the earliest inscriptions of the Kalacuris was recovered from Kāritalāi (Jabalpur District), which is no more than sixty kilometers northeast of Choṭī Deorī. (This inscription belongs to the reign of Lakṣmaṇarāja I and is dated to the Kalacuri year 593 or 841 A.D.). The role that this style played in the formation of Kalacuri art forms a significant chapter in the history of north Indian art.

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Plate 181. Sagar. Śaṅkaragaṇa panel. Early Kalacuri (Ḍāhala) style. *c.* A.D. 750-800. Sagar University Art Museum. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

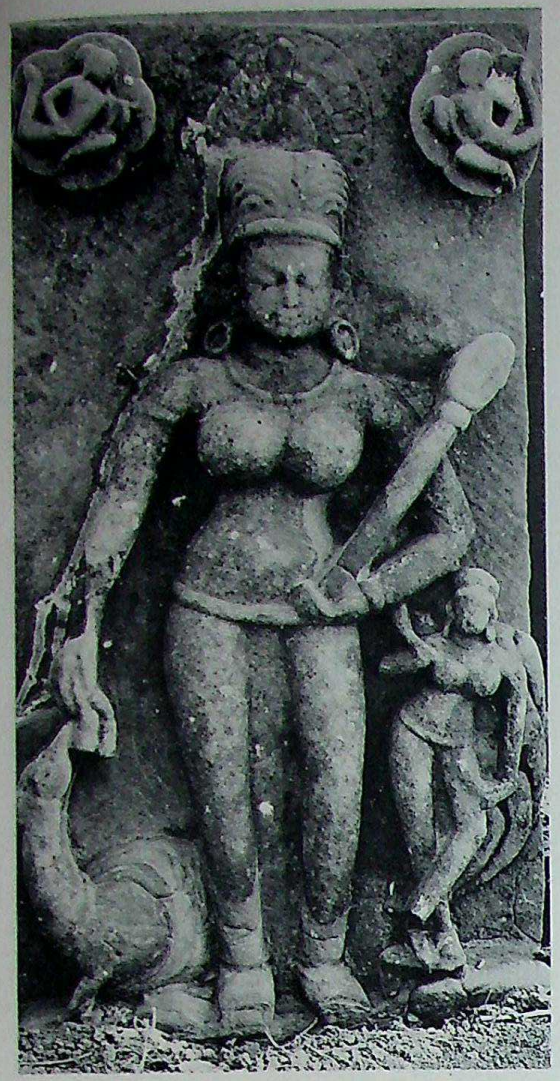

Plate 182. Nānd-Cānd. Kaumārī. Early Kalacuri (Ḍāhala) style. *c.* A.D. 750-800. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 183. Nānd-Cānd. Indrāṇī. Early Kalacuri (Ḍāhala) style. *c.* A.D. 750-800. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 184. Nānd-Cānd. Durgā. Early Kalacuri (Ḍāhala) style. *c.* A.D. 750-800. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

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NOTES

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1. Sir Harisingh Gour University Museum, museum No. 63.345. The piece measures 125 centimeters in height and 100 in width.

2. The earliest reference to these kiosks occurs in the *Archaeological Survey of India, Progress Report for Western India, 1893–1894*, p. 7. The report notes that the kiosks, which were at that time in a neglected state, were built by a previous tenant in what was his house garden. Four photographs (negative Nos. 1418–1421) of the kiosks were taken at this time, and the Śaṅkaragaṇa panel can be seen in one of them (No. 1419). The next reference to the kiosks occurs in the *Archaeological Survey of India, Progress Report for the Eastern Circle, 1912–1913*, p. 53, in which it was recommended that the "now very dilapidated" structures be taken over by the Government and repaired. Since J.D. Beglar visited Sagar in 1871–1872 and did not comment on the existence of the kiosks, it is possible that they were established sometime after his visit; see J.D. Beglar, *A.S.R.*, Vol. VII, Calcutta 1873–74, p. 60.

3. K.D. Bajpai, *Sagar Through the Ages*, Sagar 1964, pp. 18–19, Pl. IX.

4. The inscription has been edited by V.V. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri Chedi Era, C.I.I.*, Vol. IV, Pt. I, Ootacamund, 1955, inscription No. 35, pp. 174–176, Pl. XXIX A. Mirashi maintains that the inscription probably belongs to the middle of the eighth century, although Mr. Krishna Deva, of the American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi, has informed me that he felt the inscription might as likely be assigned to the third quarter of the eighth century. The first notice of the inscription occurs in Rai Bahadur Hira Lal's *Descriptive Lists of Inscriptions in the Central Provinces and Berar*, Nagpur 1916, p. 48. Hira Lal claimed that the inscription was too effaced to be read, but in his later *Inscriptions in Central Provinces and Berar*, Nagpur 1932, p. 49, he incorrectly identified the Śaṅkaragaṇa of the inscription with Śaṅkaragaṇa (*c.* A.D. 890–910) of the Kalacuri dynasty of Tripurī.

5. D.C. Sircar, "Vāmadeva-Pād-Ānudhyāta," *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. III (1940), pp. 36–37. Mirashi's reading of "Vāmarājadeva" is questionable, since the second *akṣara* of the name is quite damaged. Bajpai, *Sagar*, p. 19, has read the name as Vāhurāja and does not accept Mirashi's conclusion that these kings belonged to the Kalacuri dynasty. In all of the Kalacuri records the name is "Vāmadeva" and not "Vāmarāja."

6. The Choṭī Deorī inscription has been edited by Mirashi, *Corpus*, inscription No. 36, pp. 176–178, Pl. XXIX B. The inscription at Choṭī Deorī and the ruins at the site were first visited by Alexander Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, Calcutta 1887, pp. 100, 158–159. The inscription is engraved on a pillar that is illustrated in R.D. Banerji *The Haihayas of Tripuri and Their Monuments* (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India), Calcutta 1931, No. 23, Pl. XXVIIIa. The pillar bears only two small seated male and female figures and a standing figure who perhaps holds a bow. These figures are very damaged, and Banerji's suggestion that the seated figures represent Śiva and Pārvatī is doubtful. Pramod Chandra, while referring briefly to the importance of the Śaṅkaragaṇa panel, has maintained that some of the surviving work at Choṭī Deorī can be associated with the reign of Śaṅkaragaṇa; see Chandra's *Stone Sculpture in the Allahabad Museum*, Poona 1970, p. 26.

7. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, pp. 160–163, Pls. XL–XLI. Nānd-Cānd is sixteen kilometers north of Bargaon (Jabalpur District) and can be reached from the later village on a dirt road. A small fragmentary inscription from Nānd-Cānd has been built into the interior wall on the north side of the Mṛtageśvara temple, but it is too effaced to be read properly. Mr. Krishna Deva has suggested to me that this inscription is similar to the Śaṅkaragaṇa record at Sagar and the inscription at Choṭī Deorī and should therefore be dated roughly to the third quarter of the eighth century. Cunningham, *Report*, p. 163, also noted an inscription "on a large flat slab," but if these inscriptions are identical, the surviving one must be only a small portion of the missing epigraph recorded by Cunningham.

8. To my knowledge the only published image belonging to this period from Nānd-Cānd is contained in K.D. Bajpai's "Madhya Pradesh Through the Ages," *Marg*, Vol. XXVI, p. 3, Fig. 17, in which the illustrated piece is incorrectly labeled as belonging to Bhanpura (Mandasor District).

9. The average size of each of the *mātṛkās* is one hundred and twenty centimeters in height and sixty centimeters in width. A Vārāhī image now in the

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Sagar University Art Museum (museum No. 63.50) can also be related stylistically to the *mātṛkās* at Nānd-Cānd, although it is somewhat cruder. For a photograph of this piece see K.D. Bajpai, *Sagar*, Pl. XI. This Vārāhī was also recovered from one of the kiosks in Sagar and can be seen in an early photograph; see *Archaeological Survey of India, Progress Report for Western India, 1893–1894, neg. No. 1421.*

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28

Epigraphic Source of Indian Iconography: Some Illustrations from Deopani

B.N. MUKHERJEE

NUMEROUS EARLY and early medieval Indian epigraphs record the dedication of divinity-images and shrines. Sometimes inscriptions on the pedestal or stela or body of the icons refer to them by name. The importance of such references can hardly be overestimated. They not only help identify correctly the images concerned, but also facilitate determination of the degree of correspondence between the plastic representations of the deities and the available textual descriptions of their iconic forms.

The significance of this observation is borne out by two inscribed images found at Deopani in the Shibsagar District of Assam, now preserved in the Assam State Museum, Gauhati. One of these sculptures (No. ASM 2454), carved out of a block of blackish stone, is 35.5 cm high and 20.3 cm broad (Plate 185). The subject of the sculpture is a four-armed male figure standing in front on a lotus pedestal. The figure wields a wheel by the upper left arm, a conch on the palm of the lower left hand, a lance (or trident) by the upper right arm and a small vase (?) on the palm of the lower right hand, which otherwise is in *varada* gesture. The figure has a third eye on its forehead. It wears a low turreted crown held by a band. It is also bedecked with a long garland (*vanamālā*), a thick sacred thread, a bejeweled necklace, armlets and earrings. The figure is either nude or seems to wear a diaphanous garment. In any case, it is clearly ithyphallic. A seated *garuḍa* (with a human face and the body of a bird) is noticeable on the left and a recumbent bull on the right of the lower part of the divine figure.

An inscription, palaeographically datable to the ninth century A.D. or a little earlier, appears on the back of the stela of the image (Plate 186). It may be read as follows[1]:

L 1—(An auspicious symbol) Namaḥ svasti (I) Mahārāddhirājaḥ (read Mahārājādhirājaḥ) śrī-Di-
L 2—glekhavarma-rājye Kākhya-putreṇa Hariṇarāmeṇaḥ
L3—Hariharaḥ I Pratimā dattetī (II)

The inscription can be translated as follows:

"Salutation; may it be well with (one). This image (of) Harihara is given (i.e. installed) by Hariṇarāma, the son of Kākhya, during the reign of (or in the kingdom of) the Emperor of the great kings, the illustrious Diglekhavarman."

The inscription obviously identifies the image as Harihara. As the name suggests, Harihara represents a syncretistic deity, coalescing the concepts of Hari, i.e. Viṣṇu, and Hara, Śiva.[2] The appellation Harihara and analogous ones alluding to syncretistic concepts involving Viṣṇu and Śiva appear in the descriptions of representations of various deities in several Indian iconographic texts. Thus, while the expression "Harī-Hara" occurs in the *Vishṇudharmottara*,[3] the *Śil-*

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paratna[4] and a few other works,[5] such terms as *Harirardha*,[6] *Haryardha*,[7] *Śivanārāyaṇa*,[8] *Hariśaṁkara*,[9] and *Kṛṣṇasaṁkara*[10] appear in other iconographic lists.[11] All these names, excepting perhaps Harirardha and Haryardha, envisage icons incorporating, in equal measures, the characteristics of Viṣṇu and Śiva. Undoubtedly the Hari aspect of the syncretistic deity is stressed by the expressions *Harirardha* and *Haryardha* (both literally meaning "the half of Hari") and also by the references in the *Agnipurāṇa* to Hariśaṁkara as a form of Hari and as belonging to "the troop of Hari."[12] Nevertheless, the majority of the available descriptions of Harirardha, Haryardha and Hariśaṁkara leave no room to doubt that the icons concerned were originally purported to show, in equal proportions, the characteristic features of Viṣṇu and Śiva. In fact, the *Agnipurāṇa* explicitly states that the icon of Hariśaṁkara must possess "the characteristics of Rudra and Keśava."[13]

The right and left portions of a Harihara image are considered in a number of texts as representing respectively Hara (or Śiva) and Hari (or Viṣṇu).[14] The deity, known under above-mentioned names, is generally described as four armed.[15] But variations exist between texts regarding the cognizances to be held by the image.[16]

It appears that in the early medieval age, to which most of the relevant iconographic texts are to be dated, there was a well-known deity which assimilated the characteristics of Viṣṇu and Śiva. The composite deity, the concept of which could have originated in the early centuries of the Christian era,[17] came to be known under various names in the early medieval period. Variances between textual descriptions of the emblems and other attributes of the relevant icons indicate that there was no universally accepted iconic formula and hence form of this composite deity. The textual variations as well as the evidence of a number of extant images recognizable as those of this syncretistic deity[18] perhaps reflect regional inclinations.

The image from Deopani assumes significance in the light of these observations. As enjoined in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*, the bull (the mount of Śiva) and the *garuḍa* (the mount of Viṣṇu) appear respectively on the right and left of the deity, who is referred to in the inscription as well as in that treatise, as Harihara. However, the attributes held by the image of Harihara do not correspond exactly with the descriptions given in the texts. This icon holds, as required of Harihara in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* (?), *Śilparatna and Tantrasāra*, and of Śivanārāyaṇa in the *Matsyapurāṇa*, a disc (or wheel) and a conch in two left hands and a lance (*śūla*) or trident (*triśūla*) in the upper right hand and also shows the other (lower) right hand in *varada* pose.[19] But, additionally, the image in question holds a vessel on the palm of the lower right hand, shown in *varada* pose. If the vessel stands for a *kamaṇḍ* (water jar) it can be recognized as an attribute of Śiva.[20] Similarly, the third eye on the forehead of the image in question and its erect phallus may be taken as cognizances of the same deity.[21] It is interesting to add that at least according to the *Vāmanapurāṇa*, an icon of this composite god (called by it Hariśaṁkara) should have two and half eyes (and so should display the third eye).[22] An ithyphallic image, now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, has been sought to be identified as a representation of Harihara.[23]

It appears, then, that the icon under discussion does not exactly correspond to any of the textual descriptions or perhaps to any of the known representations of the syncretistic deity involving Viṣṇu and Śiva. It may then be taken as reflecting a local or regional conception of a form of that composite god. The inscription on the back of the stela of the image refers to this form as Harihara. Had there been no reference to it in the epigraph, it would have been impossible to be sure about the exact name by which it was known in the area where it was dedicated, even though it could be recognised, with the help of the attributes, as a syncretistic icon involving Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The usefulness of an epigraph on an icon for the purpose of identifying it is further demonstrated by another stone image, also found at Deopani in the Shibsagar District of Assam and now preserved in the Assam State Museum, Gauhati (Plate 187). The sculpture (No. ASM 2410), which shows a male figure, is 86.3 cm high and 33 cm broad.

The figure, which is four-armed and has a third eye, stands frontally. It is ithyphallic and wears at least a lower garment which is diaphanous. It is adorned with a girdle, bangles, armlets, a necklace with a pendant (resembling *śrivatsa* symbol), long ear-rings, a sacred thread and a garland (*vanamālā*). It wears an elaborate head-dress consisting of a jeweled fillet placed around the head and held against matted hair arranged in the form of a crown. The head-dress seems to be a combination of *kirīṭa-*

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mukuṭa and *jaṭā-mukuṭa*.

The upper left hand of the figure holds the stalk of a half-opened lotus, while on the palm of the lower left hand appears a conch. The upper right hand grips a trident, and the lower one, shown roughly in *varada* pose, clasps a rosary.

A standing *garuḍa* with folded hands appears on the left and a recumbent bull on the right of the lower part of the divine figure. A snake (?) can be noticed on the upper part of the right side of the stela, formed by a block of stone from which the sculpture has been hewn.

The right side of the stela's rim bears an inscription palaeographically datable to *c.* ninth or late eighth century A.D.[24] (Plate 188). The three-line epigraph may be read as follows:

> L 1—(An auspicious symbol) Namaḥ | Mahārājādhirāja śrī-Jīvarā-rājyeḥ| Guruḥ Kumaḍhabadi Saṁpaṁ—
> L 2—nnā (sampannā)—vipaña—śiṣya Tapasvīkiyāḥ sutaḥ| Adau nāma Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa
> L 3—Kīrttanaḥ| (an auspicious symbol) Valāhidi nāmakaṁ śailātai likhidaḥ|| (An auspicious symbol).

The inscription is written in very imperfect Sanskrit. Perhaps the influence of a local dialect and its phonetic peculiarities are traceable in spellings and forms of certain words. A tentative translation of the inscription may be made as follows:

"Salutation. During the reign (or in the kingdom) of Mahārājādhirāja, the illustrious Jīvarā. The teacher, Kumaḍhabadi, the disciple of excellent (or perfect) Vipanā (and) the son of Tapasvikī. Praising the name (of) Saṅkara-Nārāyaṇa in the beginning. Written by the stone obtainer (i.e. stone engraver or stone sculptor) (or mountaineer or the attendant on the idol) called Valāhidi."

The epigraph identifies the image as Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa (or Saṅkaranārāyaṇa). It was perhaps dedicated by Kumaḍhabadi (Kumārabodhi) during the reign (or in the kingdom) of Jīvarā.

Certain cognizances noticeable in the sculpture concerned, like the *Jaṭā-mukuṭa*, trident, rosary, the third eye, erected phallus, the bull and the snake (?), allude to the Śaiva affiliation of the image.[25] On the other hand, the *Kirīṭamukuṭa*, lotus, conch and the *garuḍa* emphasize its Vaiṣṇava aspect.[26] So, there is no difficulty in identifying the icon as a manifestation of a form of the syncretistic deity involving Śiva and Viṣṇu, though all the details do not correspond with those of a single form of the composite deity described in the iconographic texts.[27]

The accompanying inscription throws further light on the form of the syncretistic icon displayed by the sculpture in question. The epigraph describes this form as Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa. It appears that the deity with all the attributes noted above was known as Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa (or Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa) in the area where the image was dedicated. The name *Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa* is not given to any one of the forms of the syncretistic deity described in iconographic texts.[28] Thus the epigraph adds a new appellation to the list of names of the deity incorporating characteristics of Viṣṇu and Śiva.

Novel names are furnished occasionally also in epigraphs not inscribed on sculptures. As an example one may refer to the Deopara record of Vijayasena (*c.* 1095–1158 A.D.). The inscription states:

> We bow down to the temple called by the name Pradyumneśvara, that abode of the playful union of the beloved of Lakṣmī and the husband of Mountain's daughter, where, because of the apprehension of the cessation of the embrace, the two goddesses have taken stand between their lovers and thus somehow interfered with the complete union of bodies, (at least) in its representation in art (*śilpa*).[29]

Umāpatidhara, the author of the epigraph, obviously referred to an image enshrined in the temple concerned. The icon apparently displayed the characteristics of the beloved of Lakṣmī (i.e. Viṣṇu) and of the husband of mountain's daughter (i.e. Śiva) and was accompanied by the consorts of Viṣṇu and Śiva, as also appear by the two sides of the composite deity in a sculpture panel found at Badami.[30] The *Agnipurāṇa* clearly enjoins that Hariśaṁkara is to be accompanied by Gaurī and Lakṣmī.[31]

The image alluded to by Umāpatidhara was apparently called Pradyumneśvara. The suffix-*iśvara* in the name *Pradyumneśvara* surely refers to Śiva.[32] Pradyumna originally was the name of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva's son.[33] As one of the four *vyūhas*, he began to be considered as an emanation of Saṅkarṣaṇa, who himself was an emanation of Vyūha-Vāsudeva. So, in the ultimate analysis, Pradyumna was an emanation of Vāsudeva himself. Vāsudeva, in his turn, was identified with Viṣṇu.[34] Later, with the diffusion and elaboration of the *vyūha* system, Pradyumna came to be regarded as constituting one of the twenty-four

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forms of Viṣṇu.[35] In any case, by the time of Umāpatidhara the term *Pradyumna* apparently began to be regularly reckoned as an alternative name of Viṣṇu, since the description of Pradyumneśvara in the Deopara record clearly alludes to a composite deity involving both Viṣṇu and Śiva.[36]

The epigraphic evidence of the early medieval age discussed above demonstrates the usefulness of inscriptions on images in ascertaining their exact names, even if they are otherwise more or less identifiable. The same remark applies to legends accompanying deities engraved on early coins, particularly on Kuṣāṇa coins,[37] and labels referring to divine figures illustrating several early medieval manuscripts[38] of the Indian subcontinent. Sometimes, inscriptions on icons and also epigraphs on ordinary stone or metal furnish new iconographic names. All these data show that epigraphs can be considered a valuable source of iconography of early medieval India.

NOTES

1. The inscription was noticed by P.C. Chaudhury (in one of the issues of the *Sāptāhika Nīlācala* in the year 1891 of the Śaka era). It was critically edited by D.C. Sircar, "Some Early Inscriptions of Assam," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. X (1976–77), pp. 114–115.

2. The origin of the concept of the composite deity called Harihara most probably may be traced to syncretistic tendencies in the religious movements in ancient India. The explanatory legends, giving reasons for the origin of such a deity (*Vāmana-purāṇa*, ch. 62; J.N. Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta 1956, p. 546; A.B.L. Awasthi, *Studies in Skanda Purāṇa, Part IV—Brahmanical Art and Iconography*, p. 225; etc.) may be taken as afterthoughts.

3. *Viṣṇudharmottara* (as quoted by T.A. Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. II, reprint ed., Delhi 1968, p. 171):

> Kāryaṁ Hariharasyāpi dakṣiṇārdhaṁ Sadāśiva |
> Vāmamardhaṁ Hṛṣīkeśaśśventanīlākṛtiḥ kramāt ||
> Varatriśūlacakrābjadhāriṇo bāhavaḥ kramāt |
> Dakṣiṇe vṛṣabhaḥ pārśve vāmabhāge viḥaṅgarāṭ ||

This description of Harihara, however, does not appear in the manuscripts of the *Viṣṇudharmottara* consulted by Priyabala Shah (*Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, Third Khaṇḍa, Vol. I, pp. 148 ff. *see* also S. Kramrisch, The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (*Part III*), Calcutta 1928, pp. 65 ff).

The above account of Harihara may be taken as the earliest known textual description of this composite deity, if the verses concerned are considered to have occurred in the original *Viṣṇudharmottara* (datable *c.* fifth–seventh century A.D.) (Priyabala Shah, *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, Third Khaṇḍa, Vol. II, Baroda 1961, p. XXVI).

4. *Śilparatna* (quoted in Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. II, pp. 169–170).

5. *Tantrasāra*, ch. 2. In an edition of the *Tantrasāra* the name of the deity in question is written as *Harahari* as well as *Harihara* (*Vṛhat Tantrasara*, compiled by K. Āgamavāgīśa; edited by V. Mukhopadhyay and S. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta 1908, p. 199 v. 51).

In an addition of the *Aparājitapṛcchā* of Bhuvanadeva, (P.A. Mankad, ed., Baroda 1950), an iconic form is referred to in a sectional colophon as that of Harihara. But the detailed description in the relevant verses distinguishes it as that of Rudraganeśvara (ch. 212, vv. 38–39).

6. *Suprabhedāgama*, ch. 34 (quoted in Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt.II, p. 169); *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*, ch. 11 (quoted *Ibid.*, p. 171).

7. *Uttarakāmikāgama* (quoted *Ibid.*, pp. 168–169).

8. *Matsya-purāṇa*, ch. 260, vv. 21–27.

9. *Agni-purāṇa*, ch. 49, vv. 24–25; *Vāmana-purāṇa*, ch. 62, vv. 29–31.

10. *Aparājitapṛcchā* (see above note 5), ch. 213, vv. 28–29; *Hayaśīrṣa-Pāñcarātra, Ādikāṇḍa*, XXII, vv. 12–16a (see also H.D. Smith, *A Sourcebook of Vaiṣṇava Iconography (according to Pāñcharātra Texts)*, Madras 1969, p. 205).

11. In this connection, see also Hemādri, *Chaturvergachintāmaṇi*, II, *Vratakhaṇḍa*.

12. *Agni-purāṇa*, ch. 49, v. 24. Chapter 49 of this *Purāṇa* is devoted to the description of icons of Viṣṇu and his entourage. (M. Th. de Mallmann, *Les En-*

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seignments Iconographiques de L'Agni-Purāṇa, p. 46).

13. *Agni-purāṇa*, ch. 49, v. 25.

14. See above notes 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8. de Mallmann, *Enseignments Iconographiques*, p. 46; D.B. Pandey, *Devatārccānukīrttana, Hindūdeva Pratimā Vijñāna* (in Hindi), Varanasi 1978, p. 48.

15. See above notes 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10. The icon of Harisaṁkara is described apparently as eight-armed in the *Aparājitaprcchā*. The *Vāmana-purāṇa* refers to Harihara as fourteen armed (?) (edited by P. Tarkaratna, ch. 62, vv. 29–31). Multiplication of limbs in the iconic representations of deities probably alludes to *inter alia* attempts to lay emphasis on their supramundane character. In early Indian literature (including the *Ṛg Veda* and *Atharva Veda*) "cosmic parturition" is indicated as "the underlying religious significance of divine multiple bodily parts and forms" (*Asiatische Studien*, Vol. XXIX (1975) pp. 137–179; *Numen*, Vol. XXV, pp. 193–225).

16. See above notes 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

17. J.N. Banerjea thinks that the ithyphallic figure of Oesho (Śiva), shown on a coin of Huviṣka as holding a goat (or an antelope), a *vajra* (thunderbolt), a trident (all attributes of Śiva) and a disc (an attribute of Viṣṇu), seems to show the beginning of the interesting composite icon Hari-Hara (Harihara) of later days. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 123–124. But it should be remembered that the deity is clearly described by the accompanying legend as only Oesho (Śiva). However, a Gandhāra sculpture and also a seal of a Hephtalite chief display composite deities incorporating characteristics of Śiva and Viṣṇu (*ibid.*, p. 124).

18. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 546.

19. See above notes 3, 4, 5, and 8.

20. Shah, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Vol. II, p. 223.

21. *Ibid.* See also Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 122f and 456f.

22. *Vāmana-purāṇa* (edited by P. Tarkaratna), ch. 62, vv. 29–31.

23. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 546.

24. The inscription was first noticed by P.C. Choudhury in one of the issues of the *Sāptāhika Nīlāchala* published in Śaka 1891. The inscription has been edited by me and submitted for publication in the *Epigraphia Indica*. For discussion of the palaeographic features of this and also of the inscription on the icon of Harihara, see B.N. Mukherjee, *East Indian Art Styles—A Study in Parallel Trends*, Calcutta 1980, pp. 18–34.

25. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II., Pt. II, p. 170; Shah, *Viṣṇudharmottara*, Vol. II, p. 233; Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 122f.

26. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 170; Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 396f.

27. See above notes 3–10.

28. A reference to Saṅkaranārāyana can be noticed in an invocation in a text called *Mantradevaprakāśinī* as quoted in the *Vṛhat Tantrasāra* (see note 5), p. 199. But there is no description of the image called by the name Saṅkaranārāyaṇa. A.B.L. Awasthi discusses a form called Maheśvara-Mahāvarāha on the basis of his interpretation of the evidence of the *Skanda-purāṇa*. (V, iii, 19, 60, 17, 12). (*Studies in Skanda Purāṇa*, p. 226).

29. N.G. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. III, Rajshahi 1929, p. 46, v. 2 and p. 50.

Lakshmīvallabha-Śailajādayitayoradvaitalīlāgṛhaṁ
Pradyumneśvara-śabdalāñchhanamadhishṭhānaṁnamaskurmmahe |
yatrāliṅganabhaṅgakātaratayā sthitvāntara-kāntayorddevibhyāṁ
kathamapyabhinnatanutāśilpentarāyaḥ kṛ tah ||

30. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 546, Pl. XLVI, No. 3.

31. *Agni-purāṇa*, ch. 49, v. 25. See also *Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra, Ādikāṇḍa*, XXII, vv. 12–16a.

32. M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Delhi 1963, p. 171.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 680.

34. K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, ed., *A Comprehensive History of India, (The Mauryas and the Sātavāhanas, 325 B.C.—A.D. 300)* Vol. II, Bombay 1957, pp. 385–393. See also the *Hayaśirśa Pañcarātra, Ādikaṇḍa*. For a discussion on the representation of Caturvyūha in early Vaishṇava imagery, *see* Doris Srinivasan, "Early Vaiṣṇava Imagery: Caturvyūha and Variant Forms," *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. XXXII (1979), pp. 39ff.

35. Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 230 and 232; Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 410; de Mallmann, *Enseignments Iconographiques*, pp. 23–24.

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36. An Inscription on stone, found at Sirhalli (Gulbarga district) and dated in the fourth regnal year of the Later Calukya king Taila (III) (A.D. 1151–1156), records construction of three temples for Harihara (*Harihara bhavanatrayam*). The epigraph also speaks of the installation (of a representation) of Kamalāvallabha (i.e. Viṣṇu) and refers to (the icons) of Keśavasvāmi (i.e. Viṣṇu) Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa *A.R.I.E.*, 1958-59, App. B, No. 640). Apparently these three images were installed in the three temples dedicated to Harihara. Was each of these three deities considered by the author of the epigraph as a manifestation of Harihara? Or did he consider the name of each of these deities as alternative to that of Harihara? The worship of the syncretistic deity involving Viṣṇu and Śiva was popular even in parts of southeast Asia. Several epigraphs from Kampuchea (Cambodia, ancient Kambuja), dated or datable to the period ranging from about the later half of the sixth to about the middle of the tenth century A.D., refer to the composite deity under different names e.g. *Śambhuviṣṇu, Hariśaṁkara, Śaṅkarāchyuta, Viṣṇvīśa, Iśānaśārṅgī, Harāchyuta, Hariśvara*, and *Parameśvaraśārṅgī* (R.C. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Kambuja,* Calcutta 1953, pp. 13, 24, 30, 41, 68, 150, and 186). Some images of Harihara, assignable to the same period have also been found in Kampuchea (*Artibus Asiae, Supplementum*, XV, Pl. II, XI (a); XXIV, XXV (a), XXXIII (a), XXXV, XXXV (a), and XLII; Jean Boisselier, "Le Harihara de Bákoṅ," *Bulletin de L'École Française d' Extreme-Orient*, Vol. XLVI, Pt. I (1952), pp. 253 ff and plates XVI–XVII; etc.). These epigraphic and iconic data have been discussed by M.A. Dhaky in "Harihara in Cambodian Inscriptions and Hieratic Art" *Madhu: Recent Researches in Indian Archaeology and Art History*, Delhi 1981, pp. 263–266.

37. R.B. Whitehead, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore, (Indo-Greek Coins)*, Vol. I, Varanasi 1971, Plate XVII, Nos. 117f.

38. S.K. Saraswati, *Tantrayāna Art—An Album*, Calcutta 1977, pp. LXXIX ff.

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A Bronze Buddha Image with Inscription of Saṁvat 1207 on the Pedestal

D.C. SIRCAR

RECENTLY MY next-door neighbor, Shri Ajit Ghose, the well-known collector of antiquities in Calcutta, showed me an image of the seated Buddha in bronze, which he had purchased from a dealer who gave Nalanda in Bihar as its provenance (Plate 189). There is a one-line inscription on the pedestal of the image (Plate 190) in the medieval script of northern India. Unfortunately, all the *akṣaras* are not easily readable, and whatever could be read would not offer any meaningful record.

At the beginning, i.e. at the proper right side of the image, I could read the *Siddham* symbol followed by *saṁ* 1207 and at the center, i.e. on the front side, the three *akṣaras hajana* are very clear. This *j* is of the Bengali type; but it was also used in early Nāgarī. On the other hand *h* is of the Nāgarī type which was as well used in early Bengali. For *j* and *h* more or less of the same type as used in the image inscription, see the Ujjain inscription of Udayāditya (11th century),[1] an inscription of the time of Kalacuri Jājalladeva, dated 1114 A.D.,[2] and an inscription of the Abu Paramāra Dhārāvarṣa, dated 1208 A.D.[3] The *akṣara h* is closer to the form found in the Hasrakhol inscription[4] of the twelfth century. It should be noted that both the *akṣaras* are earlier than their final forms in Nāgarī and Bengali.[5]

Thus if the record is assigned to the Nāgarī-using area, its date would not appear to be later than the fifteenth century A.D. because of the presence of the early type of *j*, while the date would be similarly restricted if it is assigned to the Bengali-using region where *h* of this type is not expected after the 15th century. I therefore felt that the year 1207 of the date should be referred to the Vikrama *saṁvat* so that the inscription would be dated in 1149/50 A.D. This date is both suitable for the palaeography of the epigraph and also really more suitable than a date about the fifteenth century, when one generally finds the modern forms of Nāgarī *h* and Bengali *j*, which exhibit a little more developed forms than the said *akṣaras* in the inscription under study.

When the image was shown to some students of Indian art with a strip of paper pasted on the inscription, the reaction was startling. The dates of the sculpture suggested by them on stylistic grounds ranged between the 11th or 12th century and the 17th or 18th century. One of the scholars, seeing the date, went so far as to suggest that it may be referred to the Nepal *saṁvat*. However, the Nepal era commenced from 879 A.D.[6] so that 1207 of that era would correspond to 2086 A.D., more than a century after the present!

Another student of art, who suggested a very late date for the image on the grounds of style, said that the late image may have been fixed on the older inscribed pedestal. A conjecture of this kind cannot, of course, be easily disproved. However, the image, as it is now, does not show any repair or renovation of this kind.

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NOTES

1. G.H. Ojha, *Bhāratīya Prācīna Lipimālā*, New Delhi 1918, Plate XXV.
2. *Ibid.*, Plate XXVI.
3. *Ibid.*, Plate XXVII.
4. *Ibid.*, Plate XXXV.
5. Cf. the penultimate and final forms as drawn by Ojha in Plate Nos. LXXXII and LXXXIII.
6. *See* H.C. Ray, *Dynastic History of Northern India*, reprint ed., New Delhi 1973, Vol. I, pp. 193–94.

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Plate 185. Deopani. Harihara. Kāmarūpa style.
c. 9th century. A.D.

Plate 186. Deopani. Harihara. Inscription.

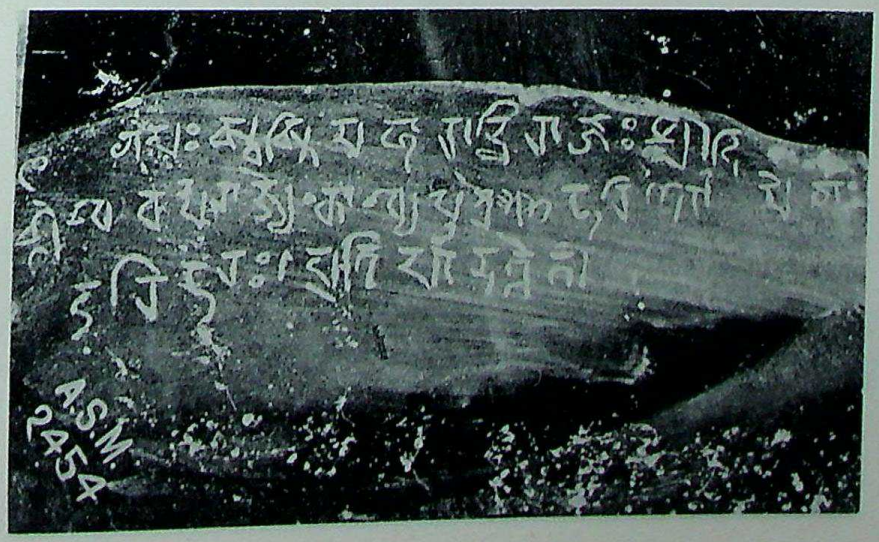

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Plate 187. Deopani. Harihara. Kāmarūpa style. *c.* late 8th or 9th century. A.D.

Plate 188. Deopani. Harihara. Inscription.

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Plate 189. Nalanda (?). Buddha. Late Pāla. A.D. 1149/50.

Plate 190. Nalanda (?). Buddha. Inscription on Buddha's pedestal.

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Plate 191. Hilsa. Tārā. Pāla style. Year 35 of Devapāla. Mid-ninth century A.D. Patna Museum, Patna.

Plate 192. Jaynagar. Pūrneśvarī (or Puṇyesvarī). Pāla style. Year 35 of Palapāla. Mid-twelfth century A.D. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

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Plate 193. Nalanda. Vāgīśvarī. Pāla style. Year 1 of Gopāla (II). Mid-tenth century A.D. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Plate 194. Mandhuk. Gaṇeśa. Pāla style. Year 1 of Gopāla (II). Mid-tenth century A.D. Mainamati Site Museum. Photo courtesy of Frederick M. Asher.

Plate 195. Bodh Gayā. Pedestal. Pāla style. Reign of Gopāla (II). Mid-tenth century A.D. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

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Plate 196. Kiul. Avalokiteśvara. Pāla style. Reign of Gopāla (III). End of first quarter of twelfth century A.D. Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta. Photo courtesy of the Ashutosh Museum.

Plate 197. Rajibpur. Sadāśiva. Pāla style. Year 14 of Gopāla (III). Second quarter of twelfth century. Black stone. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

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Plate 198. Bihar Sharif (ancient Uddaṇḍapura). Buddha's Descent from Trayastriṁsa. Pāla style. Year 2 or 3 of Śurapāla (I). Mid-ninth century A.D. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

Plate 199. Bihar Sharif (ancient Uddaṇḍapura). Buddha subduing the elephant Nālāgiri. Pāla style. Year 2 or 3 of Śūrapāla (I). Mid-ninth century A.D. Indian Museum, Calcutta.

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Plate 200. Patna District, Bihar. Miracle of Śrāvastī. Pāla style. Year 12 or 13 of Vigrahapāla (I).

Plate 201. Mandoil. Viṣṇu. Pāla style. Year 4 of Vigrahapāla (III). Third quarter of eleventh century A.D. Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi. Photo courtesy of Varendra Research Museum.

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Epigraphy from Art History: Studies in the Art of the Pāla Period

SUSAN L. HUNTINGTON

In the lineage of the Pāla dynasty of eastern India, four names—Gopāla, Śūrapāla, Vigrahapāla and Mahīpāla—were used by more than one king. Pāla inscriptions do not indicate which of the kings bearing a specific name is intended, and thus scholars have had to use palaeography and sculptural style to ascertain the correct place of sculptures inscribed with these names in the Pāla artistic developments. Some of these pieces have been placed easily, while others, I believe, have been misattributed or remain to be correctly assigned. This paper deals with these problematic pieces in the hope that some of these issues may be clarified. My study is based on an analysis of more than seventy inscribed, dated images from Bihar and Bengal dating from the seventh to twelfth centuries, including examples not only of the Pāla dynasty, but also ones from the Khaḍga, Candra, Sena and Pratihāra dynasties, along with a few dated in the Śaka and Vikrama eras.[1] Using these pieces, which form a virtually unquestionable relative sequence, along with a corpus of some six thousand photographs of eastern Indian (Bihar, West Bengal and Bangladesh) sculptures,[2] I have been able to establish a rather clear stylistic progression of the sculptural traditions of Bihar and Bengal.[3]

Essentially, the sculptural style at the beginning of the Pāla period is, comparatively speaking simpler, less meticulously finished and freer in composition than seen in images which date from the end of the period. These features may be observed by comparing an early piece, such as the famous Tārā from Hilsa in the Patna District dated in the year 25 or 35 of the reign of Devapāla,[4] that is about 850 A.D. (Plate 191), with a representation of a goddess named Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī) dated in the year 35 of Palapāla[5] (Plate 192) from Jaynagar in Monghyr District, Bihar. Although the place of Palapāla as a ruler of eastern India is still debated, the question of his existence is no longer at issue, and this piece may be accepted as belonging to his lifetime in the late twelfth century. It can be easily seen that the late Pāla period piece bears a meticulous, highly refined finish and every detail of the composition is both carefully placed and executed. In contrast, the ninth-century example has a free, almost casual appearing arrangement and perhaps a greater sense of animation. Other distinguishing features between the two periods include the rounded stele top used in the earlier piece as compared with the attenuated and pointed top in the later piece, the more tall and narrow proportions of the later period stele and the reduction of the size of the central figure in relation to the stele slab in the later piece. Further, many of the later pieces show a much more three-dimensional carving of the central figure, providing a sense of detachment from the back slab that is often lacking in earlier works. These features, along with others, seem to evolve over the course of the eighth to twelfth centuries in a fairly

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continuous manner. That is, in my examination of the sequence of dated sculptures, I have not observed any sudden changes in stylistic direction associated with one king or period. Numerous regional and local variations, of course, are easily visible in the art, but these do not contradict the essential patterns of chronological development documented in the dated pieces.

Given this basic outline, it is possible to discuss the problematic pieces.

GOPĀLA (I, II, III)

There are three kings by the name of Gopāla who reigned during the Pāla period: Gopāla I, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, who reigned in the eighth century, Gopāla II, who reigned in the middle of the tenth century, and Gopāla III, who reigned in the second quarter of the twelfth century.

Five images from the Pāla period are inscribed as belonging to the reign of a king named Gopāla. These are: a representation of Vāgīśvarī dated in the year one and found at Nalanda[6] (Plate 193), a Gaṇeśa also dated in the year one but found at Mandhuk in the Comilla District of Bangladesh[7] (Plate 194), a pedestal from Bodh Gaya which does not have a regnal year given[8] (Plate 195), a figure of Avalokiteśvara from Kiul in the Monghyr District of Bihar which also does not bear a regnal year[9] (Plate 196), and finally, a representation of Sadāśiva dated in the fourteenth year and found at Rajibpur, in Dinajpur District Bengal[10] (Plate 197). The question is, how should these pieces be distributed among the reigns of the three Gopālas, whose dates were in the eighth, tenth and twelfth centuries, and thus were far enough apart to suggest that great stylistic changes would have occurred.

None of the images is likely to have been made during the reign of Gopāla I, and indeed, no scholar has attempted to place them there. On no grounds do these images fulfill the stylistic and palaeographic criteria of eighth-century works. For example, the Avalokiteśvara and Sadāśiva images could not possibly date from the eighth century judging from the pointed stelae tops, the elaboration of details of the lotuses and the high ornate headdresses of the central figures. In addition, even a cursory glance at the palaeography of the inscriptions would preclude an eighth-century date. In the case of the Bodh Gaya pedestal, the elaborate detailing as well as the form of the characters also disallow an eighth-century date. The other two images, the Vāgīśvarī and the Gaṇeśa, are also unlikely candidates for an eighth-century date since the Gaṇeśa strongly relates to later Pāla period images in the double-outlined double-petaled lotus pedestal and the garland and flame motif treatment of the border of the backslab. The Vāgīśvarī exhibits the detailed jewelry and somewhat hardened features associated with later Pāla period works. Further, the inscription on the Vāgīśvarī records that it was dedicated at Nalanda, a site which did not grow into real prominence until the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, the son and grandson, respectively, of Gopāla I.

How, then, should these five pieces be divided between the reigns of Gopālas II and III? In my opinion, three of them belong to the reign of Gopāla II, that is, the Vāgīśvarī, the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa and the Bodh Gaya pedestal, while the remaining two, the Avalokiteśvara and the Sadāśiva, belong to the reign of Gopāla III.

On the basis of comparison to pieces which must surely date from the twelfth century, the Vāgīśvarī image lacks the ornateness, the pointed stele top and still maintains the somewhat fleshy, naturalistic appearance to the central figure. The stele slab is shorter and wider than the more elongated form seen in later images, and in addition, the piece lacks the meticulously finished quality seen previously in the twelfth-century work dating from the year 35 of Palapāla (Plate 192). The Vāgīśvarī, then, most likely belongs to the reign of Gopāla II, *c* tenth century.

The Mandhuk Gaṇeśa may be similarly dated, and in this case, the date may be verified by comparison to a second, surprisingly similar, image of Gaṇeśa which dates from the reign of Mahīpāla (Plate 207). As I will demonstrate below, I believe this latter piece belongs to the reign of Mahīpāla I and dates from the late tenth century. Similar features include the treatment of the lotus pedestals with their double outlined forms and the use of both upturned and downturned petals as well as the treatment of the rims of the stelae, having both an inner twisted garland and outer incised design to represent flames. Furthermore, the ornamentation of the two Gaṇeśa images is similar. Certain differences do occur, such as the greater elongation of the Mahīpāla piece and its slightly greater elaboration, but clearly, the two pieces must belong to the same approximate period, that is, the tenth century. Further, the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa fulfils none of

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the criteria for twelfth-century sculpture and thus could not belong to the reign of Gopāla III.

Although there is little left of this piece to analyze, the Bodh Gaya pedestal also seems to belong to the reign of Gopāla II, as has been noted by previous authors such as R.D. Banerji.[11] The somewhat flat quality to the detailing of the foliate motifs seems to preclude a twelfth-century date, and the depictions of devotees at the right are extremely similar to such figures on the Mandhuk Gaṇeśa discussed above.

The remaining two pieces inscribed with the name of Gopāla must surely belong to the reign of Gopāla III in the twelfth century. I doubt that anyone familiar with the art of eastern India would suggest that the Sadāśiva was anything other than a twelfth-century work on the basis of its elaboration, meticulousness, detachment of the central figure from the backslab, pointed stele top and reduced size of the central figure in proportion to the whole work. The Avalokiteśvara, too, seems to embody many of the features of the twelfth century, including not only a palaeography which has been assessed to be of the eleventh or twelfth century, but also the pointed stele top, the accentuated posture of the central figure and his high headdress. Since this sculpture is rather small, it lacks some of the expected elaboration of the twelfth century, yet it must surely belong to that date.

Thus, of the five pieces inscribed with the name of Gopāla, none apparently belongs to the reign of Gopala I, three belong to the reign of Gopāla II, and two belong to the period of Gopāla III. In this case, a rather straightforward assignment can be made since the rulers lived two centuries apart, and the styles clearly follow the patterns of the respective ages.

ŚŪRAPĀLA (I, II)

Only two sculptures[12] have been found which bear inscriptions with the name Śūrapāla, and these must be assigned to either the reign of Śūrapāla I, who reigned in the middle of the ninth century, or Śūrapāla II, who ruled in the late eleventh century. These are an image of the Buddha's Descent from Trayastriṁśa (Plate 198) and one of the Buddha subduing the Elephant Nālāgiri (Plate 199). Again, enough of a difference in the dates of the two kings makes it absolutely clear where to place the two works. There is no doubt also that the two images are a pair and thus belong to the reign of one or the other of the two kings. Not only is the style of the two works virtually identical, but also their formats and sizes are also similar. Furthermore, both were found at Bihar Sharif, ancient Uddaṇḍapura, and the pieces bear virtually identical inscriptions, giving the same date, the same place of dedication and the same donor.[13] Since both are depictions of life scenes of the Buddha, their subject matter also relates, and they, in fact, may have been part of an even larger set of life scenes, the other examples of which remain lost or unidentified.

Both king Śūrapāla had very short reigns, the first king of that name ruling for only about five years, the second for only a year or two. Thus, while it is surprising that either king's name gained enough currency to be used as a dating era, it is more likely that the pieces would belong to the reign of Śūrapāla I, a suggestion which is borne out by other features as well. It should be noted, by the way, that Śūrapāla I, is not the same king as Vigrahapāla I, as had been thought by some earlier scholars,[14] and thus it is not relevant at this time to bring into the discussion the works attributed to Vigrahapāla's reign.

The most obvious argument for the placement of the two works into the reign of Śūrapāla I is that the images are dated in the year 2, or possibly 3[15] (depending on one's reading), and so it is highly unlikely that the pieces could date from the reign of Śūrapāla II, who ruled for only a year or two.[16] In addition, on a stylistic basis, the works bear much greater resemblance to the Hilsa Tārā from the reign of Devapāla shown previously (Plate 191) than they do any eleventh century works, that is, any from the reign of Śūrapāla II. Important early features include the rounded stele tops and trilobate arches, the rather free and somewhat irregular treatment of the composition, the large size of the central figure in relation to the stele and the short, squat proportions of the stele slab as compared to later Pāla period works.

VIGRAHAPĀLA (I, II, III)

There are six sculptures inscribed with the name of Vigrahapāla which must be assigned to either the reign of Vigrahapāla I, who ruled in the mid-ninth century, Vigrahapāla II, who ruled in the third quarter of the tenth century, or Vigrahapāla III who reigned in the mid-quarter of the eleventh century.

My view is that a stone image of the Miracle of Śrāvastī (Plate 200) from Patna District, Bihar belongs to the reign of Vigrahapāla I, none belongs to

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the reign of Vigrahapāla II and the other five, a metal image of Viṣṇu from Mandoil, Rajshahi District (Plate 201), three metal images of standing crowned Buddhas from Kurkihār (Plates 202, 203, 204) and a stone piece from Naulagarh, Monghyr District (Plate 205) all belong to the reign of Vigrahapāla III.

The Miracle of Śrāvastī scene dated in the twelfth or thirteenth year of the king[17] was assigned to the reign of Vigrahapāla III by French,[18] Majumdar[19] and Banerji,[20] thereby placing it in the middle of the eleventh century. Yet, in contrast to works of the eleventh century, including several I shall discuss below as belonging to the reign of Vigrahapāla III, the piece lacks the ornateness, the precision of form and the stylization of the figures. Instead, it best compares to the two sculptures from the reign of Śūrapāla I discussed above in the similarly free rendering of the forms, the body proportions and even the treatment of the lotus petals. It seems, further, from the poor photograph I have been able to obtain (I have not seen the original piece) that the Vigrahapāla inscription is also rather similar in letter forms to those of the Śūrapāla pieces. Since it is now known that Śūrapāla I and Vigrahapāla I were not the same person, but rather were cousins ruling simultaneously in different parts of the empire,[21] it may be suggested that in fact these three works are approximately contemporaneous. If this piece does belong to the reign of Vigrahapāla I, it may be necessary to revise the presently held view that this king ruled for only six or seven years to account for the year twelve or thirteen date of this piece. This, I believe, can be done without too much stress on the chronology of the early Pāla kings.

Again, I must dispute the views of published authorities in my assignment of the three sculptures from Kurkihār inscribed with the name Vigrahapāla. While R.C. Majumdar assigned them to the reign of Vigrahapāla II,[22] I believe that these pieces, along with the remaining two examples with Vigrahapāla's name, belong to the reign of Vigrahapāla III. Thus, I feel that none of the extant pieces inscribed with the name Vigrahapāla belongs to the reign of the second king of that name.

Since stone sculptures have been exclusively discussed thus far, perhaps it is easiest to examine these remaining images by looking at the stone piece first, an image of what may have been Vasudhārā (Plate 205). Found at Naulagarh in the Monghyr District of Bihar, it bears a date of the twenty-fourth year of Vigrahapāla.[23] Since the letter forms of the inscription seem to be of the eleventh or twelfth century, and the style of the figure with its elaboration and deep carving reflect late Pāla period idioms, it is likely that the piece belongs to the reign of Vigrahapāla III.

The four metal pieces, I believe, also reveal ties to late Pāla period works and would date from the reign of Vigrahapāla III. The Mandoil Viṣṇu was only discovered and acquired recently by the Varendra Research Museum, and it bears an inscription of the year four.[24] The piece has been assigned to the reign of Vigrahapāla II by previous writers, although indeed palaeographically it is difficult to decide whether the piece is of the tenth or eleventh century.[25] The characteristics of the image which I feel clearly belong to the late Pāla period, that is, the eleventh and twelfth centuries, include the extremely refined workmanship and beautiful casting of the piece and the sleek, crisp appearance which indicates the high degree of skill that had been achieved by craftsmen throughout the Pāla domains. The regularized spacing of elements contributes to an effect of a highly organized, well-planned pattern rather than the more exuberant, free configurations of earlier periods. The accentuated postures of Viṣṇu's consorts, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, along with the high *pañcaratha* pedestal and use of silver inlay to accentuate and highlight the forms are also commonly seen in later Pāla period works.

The three metal pieces from Kurkihār inscribed with the name of Vigrahapāla must also, it seems, date from the reign of Vigrahapāla III, not Vigrahapāla II, as other authors have asserted. The inscriptions on these three images of standing crowned Buddhas indicate that their stylistic similarities, indeed their virtually identical forms, is something more than a coincidence arising out of their common provenance and period, for they were all donations by relatives of an individual named Dūlapa, one being given by his wife, and two being donations of two of his sons.[26] These images bear a great deal of resemblance to the Mandoil Viṣṇu, although that piece was somewhat unusual in that it was not particularly elongated. Here, the pieces are sleek, mannered and highly refined. When compared to earlier examples from Kurkihār, they seem to represent the culmination of the tendency seen in metal images to use line rather than modeling and to harden the features of the face as seen in this profile view. The use of visual metaphors, such as the parrot beak seen here (clearly visible in profile views of the faces),

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seems to be associated with the later Pāla period idioms and represents the intellectualization of the art forms seen in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

MAHĪPĀLA (I, II)

The last name to be considered is that of Mahīpāla, which was used twice by the Pālas, first by the more well-known king, Mahīpāla I, who is credited with reviving the Pāla empire after the Pratīhāra interregnum and who reigned in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, and the second king Mahīpāla, who reigned in the third quarter of the eleventh century, supposedly for not more than five years.

In my opinion, none of the images presently known which are inscribed with the name Mahīpāla belongs to the reign of Mahīpāla II, and thus all belong to the reign of Mahīpāla I. This is essentially the traditionally held viewpoint of earlier scholars, except in the case of two of the images, for all but two of the known images must surely belong to the reign of Mahīpāla I since they bear dates in regnal years greater than five, the number of years Mahīpāla II presumably ruled. Thus, unless one wishes to make vast and perhaps unfounded revisions of Pāla chronology as it is presently known, these images must be seen as belonging to the reign of Mahīpāla I.[27]

Only two images that are inscribed with the name Mahīpāla remain to be assigned, a representation of Viṣṇu which was found at Baghaura in the Comilla District of Bangladesh and which is dated to the year three[28] (Plate 206), and an image of Gaṇeśa which was found at Narayanpur, also in the Comilla District and dated to the year four[29] (Plate 207). On the basis of the dates, the pieces could conceivably belong to the reign of either Mahīpāla I or II, and indeed, both points of view have been espoused. A.M. Chowdhury summarizes the evidence in saying that "there is no valid ground to establish that Mahīpāla mentioned in the Baghaura and Narayanpur inscriptions was Mahīpāla I, and there is no inherent improbability in the identification of Mahīpāla of these two inscriptions with Mahīpāla II . . ."[30]

In the case of the Gaṇeśa, I have already shown that it is closely related to another image of Gaṇeśa, the one from Mandhuk dated in the reign of Gopāla (Plate 194), who I believe is Gopāla II, of the tenth century. It is very unlikely that the Mandhuk piece could belong to the reign of Gopāla III in the twelfth century, and thus its tenth century date is fairly well fixed. The resemblance of the Mahīpāla piece to it strongly suggests a relationship in date, in this case a tenth or early (not late) eleventh century date and thus during the reign of Mahīpāla I.

The Baghaura Viṣṇu shows a very strong resemblance to features of the Narayanpur Gaṇeśa, including the overall shapes of the stelae, the treatment of the halo and edge of the slab of the Gaṇeśa with the same garland and flame motif that is used for Viṣṇu's halo, similarly conceived *vidyādharas* and a similar configuration of kneeling devotees at the bottom. These pieces in many ways mark a kind of intermediary point in the development from the early Pāla style to the late Pāla style, the earlier ones having their fuller forms and the later ones having their sleekness and definition of line.

SUMMARY

In sum, it has been possible to use what is a clearly definable and demonstrable stylistic progression in sculpture to shed light on problems of chronology which arose from a lack of specificity in epigraphical data. The Pāla case is rather unusual in that one has such a clearly evolved and documented style development due to the abundance of dated materials. Yet it is clear that there is here a rare instance of art history shedding important light on epigraphy.

NOTES

1. It is with regard to these sixty-eight pieces that I must express my indebtedness to distinguished scholars such as Dr. D.C. Sircar, without whose extensive work on eastern Indian inscriptions, my own studies would have been impossible.

2. I am grateful to Dr. P.L. Gupta, former Director of the Patna Museum, Dr. B.N. Sharma, Curator of Archaeology at the National Museum, Dr. A.K. Bhattacharya, formerly Director of the Indian Museum, Dr. Enamul Haque, Director of the Dacca Museum, Dr. Mukhlesur Rahman, Director of the Varendra Research Museum, along with many others

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for their help in my work, most notably in allowing me access to materials in their collections and granting permission for photography. Without their generosity, my work could never have been accomplished.

3. This stylistic analysis is more thoroughly treated in my forthcoming volume on eastern Indian sculpture, primarily Pāla and Sena periods, to be published in the *Studies in South Asian Culture* series edited by Prof. J.E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw for E.J. Brill in 1983. Some of the issues touched upon in this paper are discussed more fully there, and for the dating of the individual kings, the problem of Palapāla in the Pāla lineage and other matters, the reader is referred to that work.

4. For the inscription, *see* Surendranath Majumdar Sastri, "The Hilsa Statue Inscription of the Thirty-Fifth Year of Devapāla," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. X (1924), pp. 34–35; *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities* (Ed. Parmeshwari Lal Gupta) Patna 1965, pp. 63–64. The date was accepted as the year 25, not 35 by R.C. Majumdar, "Some Dates in the Pala and Sena Records," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters*, Vol. VII (1941), pp. 215–218 and *Yearbook*, Vol. VIII (1942), pp. 184–185. Majumdar follows S.N. Chakravarty, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet from the Fifth Century A.D. to the end of the Mohammadan Rule," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters*, Vol. IV, 3 (1938), p. 390.

5. For the inscription, *see* R.D. Banerji, "Pāla Chronology," *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. XIV (1928), p. 496; D.C. Sircar, "Jaynagar Image Inscription of Year 35," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XLI, 2 (June 1955), pp. 152–153. Banerji succeeded in deciphering only part of the inscription.

6. In addition to the analysis given here for each of the following problematic sculptures, I have checked to be sure that the palaeography of the epigraphs in question does not contradict the conclusions presented. I have only mentioned palaeography in this paper when it seemed particularly pertinent to the piece being discussed. For the Vāgīśvarī inscription, *see* Alexander Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. III, p. 120; Nilmani Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions in the Indian Museum," *Journal and Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. IV (1908), p. 106; R.R. Mukherji and S.K. Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions Bearing on History and Civilization of Bengal*, Calcutta 1967, pp. 188–192. It should be noted that Mukherji and Maity present this inscription on two different pages as if it belonged to separate images.

7. For the inscription, *see* N.B. Sanyal, "Mandhuk Inscribed Image of Ganesa of the Reign of Gopala II," *Varendra Research Society's Monographs*, No. 8, Rajshahi, Oct. 1950, p. 6.

8. For the inscription, *see* A. Cunningham, *Mahabodhi or the Great Buddhist Temple under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha-Gaya*, London 1892, p. 63; Chakravarti, "Pala Inscriptions in the Indian Museum," pp. 102–105; Mukherji and Maity, *Corpus*, pp. 184–187, 189–191.

9. For the inscription, *see* Radhakrishna Chaudhary, "Lakhisara Inscription," *Ganesh Datta College Bulletin Series*, No. 2, p. 24.

10. For the inscription, *see* N.G. Majumdar, *A.S.-I.A.R.*, 1936–37, p. 31; R.C. Majumdar, "Epigraphic Notes—Rajibpur Sadāsiva Image Inscription of Gopala III, Year 14," *Indian Culture*, Vol. XI (1944–45), pp. 123–125; R.C. Majumdar, "Some Dates in the Pala and Sena Records," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters,* Vol. VII(1941), p. 216; Claudine Picron, "Gopāla II ou Gopāla III, X^{e} ou XII^{e} siècle Datation d'une Image de Śiva," *Arts Asiatiques*, Vol. XXXIV (1978), p. 110.

11. R.D. Banerji, *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, Vol. XLVII, Delhi 1933, p. 22.

12. Since the time of writing this paper, two other sculptures of Śurapāla have come to my notice. The first is an image of Dvādaśādityas of the year 5, now in the National Museum, New Delhi. (*See* S. Huntington, *The "Pala-Sena" Schools of Sculpture*, Figure 36). The second has been brought to my attention by Frederick M. Asher. It is a metal image of Viṣṇu, presently in the Gaya Museum but its inscription has not yet been fully deciphered.

13. For the inscriptions on these two pieces, *see* Chakravarti, "Pāla Inscriptions in the Indian Museum," pp. 107–108.

14. For the discussion of this, *see* B.N. Mukherjee, "A Recently Noticed Evidence Relating to the Pala Genealogy," *J.A.S.B.*, 4th Ser., Vol. XIII, 1–4 (1971) pp. 201–204. The information is known from the Mirzapur plate inscription, edited by D.C. Sircar in *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. LXI (1975), pp. 131–148.

15. For the discussion of the problem of the reading of the year two versus the year three, *see* Chakravarti, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390.

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16. The reign of Śūrapāla I was not much longer than that of Śūrapāla II, and thus this cannot be considered a compelling reason for selecting one king over the other. The stylistic arguments lend the greatest support for the case.

17. The year twelve was first read by Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. III, p. 121 but Banerji read it as the year thirteen (R.D. Banerji, *The Pālas of Bengal*, Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. V, 3, Calcutta 1915 p. 112). The reading of the year twelve was later corroborated by Chakravarti, "Development of the Bengali Alphabet," p. 390.

18. J.C. French, *The Art of the Pāla Empire of Bengal*, London 1928, dated piece No. 11 on list.

19. R.C. Majumdar, *The History of Bengal*, Vol. I (*The Hindu Period*), Dacca 1943, p. 174.

20. Banerji, *The Palas of Bengal*, p. 112.

21. *Cf.* footnote 14 above.

22. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 174.

23. For the inscription, *see* B.K. Chaudhary, "Naulagarh Inscription," *Ganesh Datta College Bulletin Series*, No. 1, n.d. (1950?), p. 10 and D.C. Sircar, "Some Inscriptions from Bihar," *J.B.R.S.*, Vol. XXXVII, 3–4 (Sept.–Dec. 1951), p. 4.

24. For the inscription, *see* S. Siddhanta, "Some Recently Acquired Sculptures in the Varendra Research Museum," *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum*, Vol. 3 (1974), p. 108 and A.M. Chowdhury, "Mandoil Viṣnu Image Inscription of Vigrahapāla," *Journal of the Varendra Research Museum*, Vol. 3 (1974), p. 49.

25. *Cf.* footnote 24 above. Chowdhury (pp. 49–51) equivocates as to whether the piece belongs to the reign of Vigrahapāla II or that of Vigrahapāla III although leans towards a date in the reign of Vigrahapāla II.

26. For the inscriptions, *see Patna Museum Catalogue*, pp. 131–133.

27. These works are too numerous to be included here. For a list of the sculptures and their inscriptions *see* Huntington, *The Pāla-Sena Schools of Sculpture*, Chapter 3 and Appendix of dated inscriptions.

28. For the inscription, *see* N.K. Bhattasali, "Some Image Inscriptions from East Bengal," *E.I.*, Vol. XVII (1923–24), p. 355.

29. For the inscription, *see* D.C. Sircar, "Nārāyaṇpur Vināyaka Image Inscription of King Mahīpāla, Regnal Year 4," *Indian Culture*, Vol. IX (1942–43), pp. 121–125.

30. A.M. Chowdhury, *Dynastic History of Bengal*, Dacca 1967, p. 75.

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Plate 202. Kurkihār. Standing crowned Buddha. Pāla style. Year 3 of Vigrahapāla (III). Third quarter of eleventh century A.D. Patna Museum.

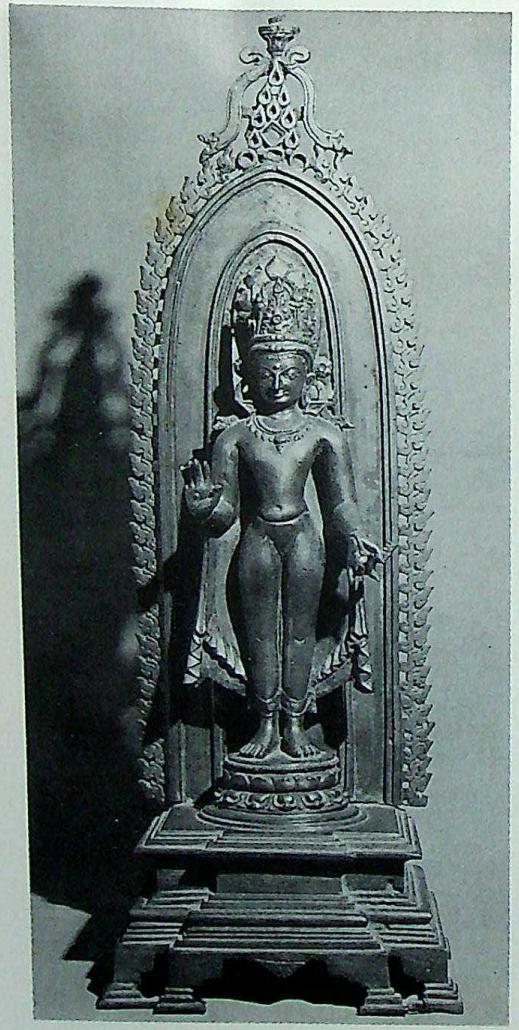

Plate 203. Kurkihār. Standing crowned Buddha. Pāla style. Year 3 of Vigrahapāla (III). Third quarter of eleventh century A.D. Patna Museum.

Plate 204. Kurkihār. Standing crowned Buddha. Pāla style. Year 19 of Vigrahapāla (III). Third quarter of eleventh century A.D. Patna Museum.

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Plate 205. Naulagarh. Pedestal. Pāla style. Year 24 of Vigrahapāla (III).

Plate 206. Baghaura. Viṣṇu. Pāla style. Year 3 of Mahīpāla (I). Late tenth century A.D.

Plate 207. Narayanpur. Gaṇesa. Pāla style. Year 4 of Mahīpāla (I). Late tenth century A.D. Dacca Museum.

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Artists of Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala: A Study Based on Epigraphs

R.N. Mishra

RESEARCH IN art history, or for that matter any historical research, of necessity requires investigation and interpretation of "survivals" and their antecedants with the simultaneous realization that parts of tradition might have been materially lost, perhaps even irretrievably so.[1] Epigraphy, in such a situation, assumes a role at once significant and substantial. Within a different framework of study,[2] it is of invaluable importance in comprehending art forms within their proper space-time perspective involving, among other things, interaction of such factors as donors, canons and artists-craftsmen. This paper attempts to discuss the information about one of these factors, the master-artists and craftsmen who flourished in the Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala regions of central India from the tenth to the fifteenth century. The information is based on epigraphs which relate these artists and craftsmen to the art activity in the region.

The monuments as well as the sculptures of Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala schools illustrate a distinctive manner and style which flourished in central India and adjacent regions. While there is no difficulty in comprehending a basic organic as well as stylistic unity in the monuments and sculptures of the region,[3] an enquiry into the factors that ultimately led to formalism raises certain problems. Since no definite evidence is available to indicate dependence of art activity in the region on any particular written *vāstu* and *śilpa*, an attempt to define the compatibility of monuments or sculptures vis-a-vis the then existing *śilpa*-canons is not possible at present. Surely the work was not done without reference to canons. Inscriptions repeatedly refer to craftsmen and their adherence to Viśvakarmā discipline.[4] But the unavailability so far of any definite *vāstu* or *śilpaśāstra* of the Viśvakarma tradition having a direct bearing on sculptures and monuments of the regions in question now precludes the possibility of attempting any such correlation.

It is likely, however, that the unity or the stylistic similarity in the art tradition of Ḍāhala on one hand and Dakṣiṇa Kosala on the other arose out of experimentation of master craftsmen and artisans. General variations in style may be similarly explained. The relevant epigraphs offer significant details concerning the institution of craftsmen and artisans, their family relationship, hierarchical status, mobility, proficiency in *vāstu* and *śilpa* rules and several other factors. It seems that the institution of craftsmen was important enough to play a crucial role whenever any type of building activity was contemplated. Any work in stone, from the stage of planning to its conclusion and down even to jobs of engraving letters on a copper plate or stone slab, fell within the field of artisans. Their professional cadres were appropriately equipped for carrying out such tasks. The relevant inscriptions of Ḍāhala refer to twelve *sūtradhāras*, one *vijñānika*, one *rūpakāra* and twenty

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Plate 205. Naulagarh. Pedestal. Pāla style. Year 24 of Vigrahapāla (III).

Plate 206. Baghaura. Viṣṇu. Pāla style. Year 3 of Mahīpāla (I). Late tenth century A.D.

Plate 207. Narayanpur. Gaṇesa. Pāla style. Year 4 of Mahīpāla (I). Late tenth century A.D. Dacca Museum.

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Artists of Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala: A Study Based on Epigraphs

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RESEARCH IN art history, or for that matter any historical research, of necessity requires investigation and interpretation of "survivals" and their antecedants with the simultaneous realization that parts of tradition might have been materially lost, perhaps even irretrievably so.[1] Epigraphy, in such a situation, assumes a role at once significant and substantial. Within a different framework of study,[2] it is of invaluable importance in comprehending art forms within their proper space-time perspective involving, among other things, interaction of such factors as donors, canons and artists-craftsmen. This paper attempts to discuss the information about one of these factors, the master-artists and craftsmen who flourished in the Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala regions of central India from the tenth to the fifteenth century. The information is based on epigraphs which relate these artists and craftsmen to the art activity in the region.

The monuments as well as the sculptures of Ḍāhala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala schools illustrate a distinctive manner and style which flourished in central India and adjacent regions. While there is no difficulty in comprehending a basic organic as well as stylistic unity in the monuments and sculptures of the region,[3] an enquiry into the factors that ultimately led to formalism raises certain problems. Since no definite evidence is available to indicate dependence of art activity in the region on any particular written *vāstu* and *śilpa*, an attempt to define the compatibility of monuments or sculptures vis-a-vis the then existing *śilpa*-canons is not possible at present. Surely the work was not done without reference to canons. Inscriptions repeatedly refer to craftsmen and their adherence to Viśvakarmā discipline.[4] But the unavailability so far of any definite *vāstu* or *śilpaśāstra* of the Viśvakarma tradition having a direct bearing on sculptures and monuments of the regions in question now precludes the possibility of attempting any such correlation.

It is likely, however, that the unity or the stylistic similarity in the art tradition of Ḍāhala on one hand and Dakṣiṇa Kosala on the other arose out of experimentation of master craftsmen and artisans. General variations in style may be similarly explained. The relevant epigraphs offer significant details concerning the institution of craftsmen and artisans, their family relationship, hierarchical status, mobility, proficiency in *vāstu* and *śilpa* rules and several other factors. It seems that the institution of craftsmen was important enough to play a crucial role whenever any type of building activity was contemplated. Any work in stone, from the stage of planning to its conclusion and down even to jobs of engraving letters on a copper plate or stone slab, fell within the field of artisans. Their professional cadres were appropriately equipped for carrying out such tasks. The relevant inscriptions of Ḍāhala refer to twelve *sūtradhāras*, one *vijñānika*, one *rūpakāra* and twenty

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other artisans.[5] Statistically, this adds up to a total of thirty-four craftsmen of different categories for thirty-four constructions which came up during the course of five centuries, from the eighth to the thirteenth. Similarly, in Dakṣiṇa Kosala, where epigraphs have preserved information about the construction of fifty-three monuments, information is available concerning twenty-one craftsmen of various categories, namely *sūtradhāra, śilpī*, and *rūpakāra*.[6]

That these craftsmen were actually involved in building work is clearly borne out by epigraphs. *Sūtradhāra* Śambhūka is said to have "carried out" the work of building a temple of Viṣṇu; *Sūtradhāra* Śreṣṭhin "constructed" a very white canopy. The Bilvapāṇi-Śiva temple was "constructed" jointly by *Sūtradhāra* Sampula and *Rūpakāra-Śiromaṇi* Devagaṇa. Similarly *Sūtradhāra* Pīṭhe "planned all (the structures) as Pṛthu did the earth."[7]

It seems that craftsmen functioned under the dictates of patrons who included rulers, religious pontiffs, officers of the state and other persons of resources and means. But in such a function, perhaps their individual skill was of crucial value. Sūrāka, Nīlakaṇṭha, Saṅgama, Nonna, Pīṭhe, Mahīdhara and Nāmadeva[8] appear to have been in some way or the other related to Śaiva pontiffs who were held in high respect by the Kalacuri rulers. Some of these, namely Nīlakaṇṭha, Pīṭhe and Mahīdhara seem to have been directly involved in the construction of temples or monasteries meant for the Śaiva ascetics. In the case of other artists, their relationship with pontiffs and rulers may be suggested on the basis of their contemporaniety with monuments that were built during the reigns of Yuvarājadeva I, Lakṣmaṇarāja II, and others.

That these craftsmen were skilled in their profession is borne out by pertinent references in some inscriptions. Saṅgama, Mādhava and Śreṣṭhin, for example, were "excellent" *sūtradhāras*.[9] Mādhava, in addition, was "expert in the science of Viśvakarmā,"[10] a qualification achieved by Mahīdhara also, who is mentioned as the "one who understands the teaching and practical works of the science invented by Viśvakarmā."[11] Mahīdhara has been described as *sūtradhāra-śiromaṇi*, crest-jewel of the *sūtradhāras*. His father was known as *sūtradhāra-agraṇī*, foremost among the *sūtradhāras*.[12]

The craftsmen of Dakṣiṇa Kosala have been similarly eulogised. Hāsala has been described as *sakala-śilpa-nidhi*, repository of all mechanical art.[13] The *rūpakāra* Ratnapāla was "illustrious" in his craft.[14] Sāmpula, who is mentioned both as *rūpakāra* and *sūtradhāra*, was "intelligent", and as an expert he was reputed as the one "who had seen the farther shores of the ocean of various mechanical arts": *aneka śilpa nirmāṇa payodheḥ pāra-dṛśvanā*.[15] Devagaṇa was a *rūpakāra* of repute and has been described as *rūpakāra-śiromaṇi*, crest jewel of *rūpakāras*.[16] Dhanapati and Īśvara were "intelligent" and "sensitive" *śilpīs*.[17] Jātu, a *śilpī*, is mentioned as one who had "distinguished" himself in *śilpa-vijñāna*, the science of sculpting.[18] The versatility of artisans and craftsmen is borne out by the Ratnapur stone inscription which contains valuable information about the *sūtradhāra* Chītaku. In the opening verse it contains an obeisance to Viśvakarmā; then it goes on to relate the qualifications of Chītaku:

> Among *sùtradhāras*, Chītaku, the light of Kokāsa family, is well-known for his proficiency in [the] *śilpaśāstras* and has virtue of compassion in his heart. By favour of gods and preceptors, he is the ocean of five sciences, a veritable Nārāyaṇa in respect of draftsmanship, meritorious and truthful. The *sūtradhāra* Chītaku can work on wood and stone and also on gold with ease. He possesses knowledge of [the] great science, the science of *jantra* "machinery". The *sūtradhāra* Chītaku knows how to play on *vaṅka* and *trivaṅka* and to carve creepers and leaves. He also knows the *tritāla* and *saptatāla*. The *sūtradhāra* Chītaku, the able son of Manmatha, is a perfect master of sciences and has fixed his heart on Keśava. His younger brother is Maṇḍana, ... a reader of scriptures.... All merits together with knowledge of astronomy will be found in Maṇḍana by the favour of Viśvakarmā.... [19]

References to Chītaku and others clearly indicate that artisans were not narrow specialists in their trade. As they practiced their craft in the family set-up, their skills improved, and with it their status also improved. The *sūtradhāra* occupied the highest position in the hierarchy of craftsmen, and he guided the work.[20] He was assisted by *śilpīs, vijñānikas*, and *rūpakāras*, the designations which identify other hierarchical categories. Such conclusions are implicit in the inscriptions. When a temple of Rāma and a tank were built near Mukundpur (Rewa), Vidyādhara acted as superintendent of works, Ananta as *sūtradhāra*, Puruṣottama as the measurer of propor-

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tions, and the others such as Ralhaṇa, Śrīdhara, Uddharaṇa worked in capacities not specified in the epigraph.[21]

In the case of two *sūtradhāras* joining hands to work on the same building, the one who was more proficient perhaps obtained a superior position. This is indicated in the case of Mahīdhara. As a *sūtradhāra* he built a Śiva temple for the Śaiva pontiff Bhāvabrahma in 1151 A.D.[22] In 1155 A.D. his name occurs in company of *sūtradhāra* Pīṭhe at Bherāghāṭ. [23] Pīṭhe was the planner of the edifices in this case and Mahīdhara obviously his assistant. Where *sūtradhāras* were not available, work was entrusted to *śilpīs* and *rūpakāras*. This is particularly true of the Dakṣiṇa Kosala region. Inscriptions of this region refer to several *śilpīs* such as Dhanapati and Īśvara, Jātu, and Chītaku, or to the *rūpakāras* such as Devagaṇa, Pālhūka and others.[24] That *sūtradhāras* allotted work to others is indicated also by the case of Nīlakaṇṭha, who is expressly stated to have engraved letters of the Chandrehe inscription at the orders of *sūtradhāra* Sūrāka.[25] Some epigraphs refer to superintendents or overseers of such works. Vidyādhara has been mentioned in the above-cited case as one such officer. Similar is the case of *śreṣṭhī* Ralhaṇa who is mentioned as an officer of religious endowments, including perhaps the work requiring construction of temples. He has been mentioned as the one who was fairly conversant with a number of arts.[26]

The craftsmen and artists were not narrow specialists in their professions. For instance, Chītaku, whose qualifications have been quoted above, was versatile as an artist. The job of building a temple required among other things the knowledge of draftsmanship, planning, stone and metal work. It is natural to assume that a *sūtradhāra* must have known enough about all these crafts to be successful in his work. Knowledge of metallurgy perhaps made craftsmen's position more vulnerable in times of war. There are references elsewhere to indicate that in times of war, their services were requisitioned for tasks in battle.[27]

The intrinsic evidence of Kalacuri inscriptions seems to suggest that the proficiency of artisans and craftsmen in their profession resulted from their family background. Their home was their workshop where apprenticeship became a part of their process of growing up. Inscriptions contain information to indicate the practice of the same craft for two or three generations in the same family, and there is good reason to believe that the tradition was maintained still longer. In the cases of Mādhava and Nonna, the inscription refers to the names of their fathers also, namely Maheśvara and Saṅgama.[28] There is information about three generations of the same family in the case of the *sūtradhāra* Mahīdhara, whose father Bālasiṁha and son Nāmadeva, find mention in inscriptions.[29] Mahīdhara is first mentioned as a *sūtradhāra* who engraved a commendable *praśasti*. At the same time he is eulogized as "one who understands the teaching and practical works of the science invented by Viśvakarmā." He built a Śiva temple during the reign of Gayākarṇa in 1151 A.D. Six years later, in 1157 A.D., he reappeared along with Pīṭhe when a lecture hall, gardens and groves were planned and completed during the reign of Narasiṁhadeva at Bherāghāṭ. By 1157 A.D., thus, he had constructed one temple all by himself (with the assistance of other unknown artisans) and another temple in collaboration with Pīṭhe. Mahīdhara is mentioned again as *sūtradhāra-śiroratna* by his son Nāmadeva, who worked during the reign of Jayasiṁha. In these references, one can easily glean the continuity of the same profession for three generations in one family.

The history of the Kokāsa family of craftsmen is even more interesting due to its longevity and wide attention. Kokāsa first appears merely as an artisan in the team of *sūtradhāra* Kamalasiṁha, who worked in the Satna region in 1159 A.D. The name of Pālhaṇa also occurs along with that of Kokāsa. In an inscription dated in 1167 A.D., a reference is made to Kokāsa's family and to Tālhaṇa, son of Pālhaṇa, who too belonged to Kokāsa's family. By the time this family was next heard of in 1495–96 A.D., it had moved from Ḍāhala to Dakṣiṇa Kosala. *Sūtradhāra* Chītaku, the son of *sūtradhāra* Manmatha, was working in South Kosala along with his brother Maṇḍana. All these craftsmen indeed had enviable repute for skill.[30] The family of Kokāsa became famous, and its members figure in several legends preserved in Jaina texts.[31]

Patronage doubtless was an important factor in art activity, and it appears that the craftsmen were employed by the State whereby they served along with the *karaṇikas*, "scribes", and *kāyasthas* who were junior officers. Sometimes the State appointed its own superintendent of work, and in such circumstances *sūtradhāras* might have been required to work under them.

At least two such cases are known from the Kalacuri epigraphs. One relates to the *vāstavya* Vidyā-

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dhara who built a Rāma temple and excavated a tank near Mukundpur (Rewa) in collaboration with several other artisans and craftsmen;[32] the other relates to *Śreṣṭhī* Ralhaṇa who was *dharma-karma-adhikārin*, an officer-in-charge of religious works[33] during the reign of Ratnadeva III. Epigraphs also indicate that while scribes, writers and composers of records enjoyed a longer term of service, artisans kept changing during the corresponding period. For instance, Kumārapāla, a scribe, is known to have continued in his job of "writing" eulogies from 1167/68 to 1181/82 A.D., from the time of Pṛthvīdeva II to Ratnadeva III. But engravers of these eulogies kept changing: During his consistent term of work for the Kalacuris of Dakṣiṇa Kosala, he teamed with no less than six craftsmen: Sāmpula (twice), Devagaṇa, Dhanapati, Īśvara, Chītaku and Jātu.[34]

Artisans and craftsmen seem to have been true professionals. They carried out their assigned works unmindful of the social status or religious affiliations of donors who employed them. There are cases where craftsmen were employed to work for religious pontiffs, as in the cases of Vimalaśiva, who built a Śiva temple near Jabalpur or Prabodhaśiva, who built a monastery at Chandrehe. There is at the same time the case of a *sūtradhāra* who built a Viṣṇu temple for a cobbler named Devapāla. The relevant inscription describes Devapāla as follows: "There shines Devapāla, the son of a repository of merits named Śivadāsa and grandson of ... Jasau a shoe-maker ..., who is clear in performance of his work (e.g. shoe-making) ... (who) is fond of various pious deeds. He has caused to be constructed a temple of Nārāyaṇa together with a *maṇḍapa*." The work was done by *sūtradhāra* Ratnadeva. The Kalacuri inscriptions contain information about various categories of donors of monuments, which included rulers, Śaiva pontiffs, members of the ruling family, their ministers, officers, feudatories and sometimes other persons like the *Śreṣṭhī* Dāmodara, or, a Brāḥmaṇa Harigaṇa. These references indicate that the craftsmen carried out their work regardless of the social status of their masters. Stylistic similarities in sculptures of different religious sects in the region may help suggest that the same craftsmen carved them all according to the requirements of the donors, regardless of their own personal religious faith.

References to one and the same craftsman in the inscriptions of different dates help in understanding the span of activity of particular craftsmen. Thus Hāsala finds mention in two inscriptions,[35] one dated in 1069 A.D. and the other in 1079 A.D. In the earlier reference he is mentioned as "engraver" of copper plates; later he finds mention in the inscription describing the construction of a *catuḥśatikā*, a *maṇḍapa* resting on four pillars, which was added to the pre-existing Vaṅkeśvara temple. The other craftsmen, similarly known, include Lakṣīdhara (1144–49 A.D.), Cāndārka (1148–1154 A.D.), Sāmpula (1149–1168 A.D.) and Mahīdhara (1151–1155 A.D.). Sāmpula and Mahīdhara are mentioned in inscriptions which refer to construction of temples, and their active association with such constructions is explicit in the relevant inscription. Sāmpula occurs as a *sūtradhāra* who, in collaboration with *rūpakāra-śiromaṇi* Devagaṇa, "constructed" the temple of Bilvapāṇi-Śiva at Sāmbā. This work was commissioned by a *vāstavya* named Devagaṇa who had migrated to Ratanpur from Cedideśa. The temple at Sāmbā was completed by 1149/50 A.D., the date given in the inscription. Sāmpula is mentioned again in an inscription which records the construction of the Kedāreśvara temple at Mallār in 1167/68 A.D. It may be suggested on the basis of these references that it took a *sūtradhāra* about ten years to complete a temple. In bigger edifices time expended in concluding the work might have been more than a decade.

These craftsmen worked according to the demands of donors and *vāstu*-discipline, and it is difficult to indicate the degree of freedom enjoyed by them in their work. Information on this point indeed is scanty. The epigraphic allusions to craftsmen, short as they are, do not help much in providing a detailed analysis of their professional freedom or creative ability. Normally, it would appear that *vāstu*-canons restricted the creative process, but if in iconography they were fettered by canonical prescriptions, style still was their own domain. Sometimes craftsmen claimed a perfect knowledge in *śāstras*,[36] which indicates that it might have been difficult for artists to function independently, without conforming to *vāstu*- and *śilpa*-rules.

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NOTES

1. Some of these questions were discussed at length in a workshop held on "Ancient Indian Sculptural Studies: A Search for Alternative Framework," sponsored by the School of Studies in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Jiwaji University, Gwalior, in September 1978, with the financial support of the University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

2. R.N. Misra, *Ancient Artists and Art Activity*, Simla 1955, pp. 25–30; R.N. Misra, "Paramāra Art: An Alternative Framework," *Art of the Paramaras of Malwa*, Delhi 1979, pp. 29–34.

3. R.N. Misra, "Ancient Artists and Stylisation: A Case-study of Ḍāhala Sculptures," *Proceeding of Workshop in History of Art*, Baroda 1979, pp. 106–116.

4. V.V. Mirashi, *Inscription of Kalachuri-Chedi Era, C.I.I.*, Vol. IV (Parts 1–2), Ootacamund 1955, pp. 230, 251, 307, 317.

5. The list consists of various categories of craftsmen as follows: *Sūtradhāra*: Sūrāka, Saṁgama, Mādhava, Sāmbhūka, Śreṣṭhin, Bālasiṁha, Mahīdhara, Pīṭhe, Kamalasiṁha, Ananta, Jagaddeva and Gaṇapati; *Vijñānika:* Kūke (also mentioned as a *Lohāra*); *Rūpakāra:* Tālhaṇa; *Others*: Nīlakaṇṭha, Bhāka, Maheśvara, Nonna, Nāmadeva, Some, Kokāsa, Pālhaṇa, Ulhaṇa, Puruṣottama, son of Galhaṇa, Śrīdhara, Lakṣmīdhara, Kīkaka, Pūjā, Raukā, Vadaṁdhala and one other artist whose name does not occur though his name is mentioned. *Cf.* Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, (Part I); Also Bhoṭe and Chītara mentioned by A. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXI, Pts. I and II, Calcutta 1885, p. 166. I am indebted to K.D. Bajpai for the information about Gaṇapati.

6. The list consists of various ranks of craftsmen as follows: *Sūtradhāra*: Sāmpula, Dharaṇīdhara Manmatha, Chītaku, Nāmadeva Ratnapāla. Chītaku and Ratnapāla of this list are different from their name-sake mentioned below; Sāmpula for instance occurs as a *rūpakāra* also. *Śilpī*: Dhanapati, Īśvara, Hāsala, Jātū and Chītaku. *Rūpakāra*: Sāmpula, Ratnapāla, Devagaṇa, Pālhūka, Dityana and Maṇḍana. *Others*: Lakṣmīdhara, Cāndarka, Keśava, Ralhaṇa, *Cf.* Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, (Part 1).

7. Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, pp. 235, 311, 317.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 201, 208, 215, 307, 317, 336.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 230, 311, 561.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 307.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 336, 317.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 470.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 456.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 488, 515.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 488.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 507.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 539.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 556.

20. Misra, "Artists," pp. 34–48.

21. Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, pp. 353–354.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

24. Sāmpula provides the only exception to such examples. In one instance he is mentioned as *sūtradhāra* who worked with Devagaṇa, the *rūpakāraśiromaṇi* in 1147/48. A decade later, in 1167/68 A.D., he finds mention only as a *rūpakāra*: *cf.* Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, pp. 448–515.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 353, 539.

27. Alice Boner and Sadaśiva Rath Sarma with Rajendra Prasad Das, *New Light on the Sun Temple of Koṇārka*, Varanasi 1974, *Introduction*, pp. xxix-xxx.

28. Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, pp. 230, 215.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 317, 336.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 324, 329, 556, 561.

31. The Kokāsa story is told in the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* (*c.* 5th-6th cent. A.D.), p. 61, lines 24 to 64. The variants are Kukkāsa, Kukkasa, Kokkasa, Kokasa, Kokkosa, and Kokkāsa. The Sanskrit form in the commentary to the *Āvaśyaka* by Haribhadra (pp. 409a–410) and the Bṛhatkathā of Hariṣeṇa (pp. 55–174) is Kokāsa. In the *Bṛhatkathā-śloka-śaṁgraha* of Buddhasvāmin (v. 201) he is called Pukvasa (an offspring of a Niṣāda man and a Śūdra woman, according to the *Manusmṛti* 10.18). Story of Kokkāsa is preserved in the *Āvaśyaka-niryukti* (924), the *Āvaśyaka cūrṇi* (p. 103), the *Viśesāvasyaka-bhāṣya* (3608) and the *Bṛhatkathā* of Hariṣeṇa (55: 173ff). The full story of Pukvasa, an artisan of king Mahāsena of Ujjayanī, is preserved in the *Bṛhatkathā-śloka-saṁgraha* (5. 200–278). I am indebted to Professor J.C. Jain for these references.

32. Mirashi, *Inscriptions*, pp. 353–354.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 539.

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34. *Ibid.*, pp. 488, 507, 524, 539.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 400, 407.
36. Maṇḍana along with Chītaku is said to have attained "skill in many crafts" including "expertise" in art of carving "sculpture." He had also memorised the *Śāstra*, and as such he is described as *śāstra-jabī*: *Cf.* Mirashi, *Inscriptions,* pp. 556, 561. Other *sūtra-dhāras* or artists mentioned in the inscriptions have also been identified as knowers of *śāstra*.

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A Note on the Nāḍlāī Stone Inscription of Kēlhaṇa (V.S. 1228)

R.N. MISRA

THE NĀḌLĀĪ inscription (V.S. 1228) of Kelhaṇa, a ruler of the Cāhamāna dynasty of Naḍḍula, refers to the construction of the Bhivaḍeśvara temple dedicated to Śiva.[1] The temple, now ruined, was situated a mile to the southwest of Nāḍlāī; the inscription was found near the temple.

This record is valuable for its information on certain obscure temple architectural terms. It also contains information about master-craftsmen and their function, including perhaps the monetary gains accruing to the *sūtradhāra* for completing the work assigned.

According to the inscription, Pāhinī, the son of the *sūtradhāra* Mahaḍuā (Mahādeva) built the *maṇḍapa, akṣasāma* and *ḍamā* of the temple of Bhivaḍeśvara. His wife (mother?) Jasadevī also finds mention in the work. Pāhinī is said to have built those adjuncts to the temple by using stone and bricks. The cost of construction is computed at 330 *drammas*.[2] This amount may refer either to the cost of material or to the benefit accruing to Pāhinī, the chief architect. According to the epigraph two other architects, *sūtradhāra* Mahīdarā (Mahīdhara) and Indarāka (Indrāka), the latter's rank not indicated, helped Pāhinī accomplish the "religious" work.

Since information on the mechanics of artists' operation is scanty, the present inscription is especially significant. It shows that artists and craftsmen tended to form a team for accomplishing their work. That a hierarchy was maintained though help rendered by different categories of artisans or master-craftsmen is acknowledged as is the fact that the architect's profession was hereditary in nature and that women in the family rendered professional help.

NOTES

1. D.R.Bhandarkar, "Nāḍlāī Stone Inscription of Kēlhaṇa [Vikrama] Saṁvat 1228," *E.I.*, Vol. XI (1911–12), pp. 47 ff.

2. *Dramma* was a measure as well as a coin. The *drammas* are known to have existed in three metals: copper, silver and gold. The *Līlāvatī* (I.2–4) of Bhāskarācārya (1150 A.D.) gives an equation of different coins as follows: 16 *paṇas*=1 *dramma*; 16 *drammas*=1 *niṣka*. This may be indicated that *paṇa, dramma* and *niṣka* signified respectively copper,

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silver and gold. For a discussion on *dramma* primarily as silver currency and other interpretations, *cf.* L. Gopal, "Coins in the Epigraphic and Literary records of Northern India in the Early Medieval Period," *Journal of Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XXV, Part 1 (1963), pp. 1–12. The reference from *Līlāvatī* quoted here has been taken from the paper mentioned above.

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Andhra Epigraphs in Relation to Art and Architecture

S.S. RAMACHANDRA MURTHY

I PROPOSE to present in this paper my observations under two sections, the major one dealing with foundations and subsequent renovations of temples in Andhra Pradesh as gleaned from epigraphical sources and the minor one with the descriptions given in inscriptions of some of the temples of that region.

The earliest known epigraphical reference to a Brahmanical temple in Andhra Pradesh may be dated to about the second century A.D. The Vēlpūru (Guntūr District) inscription of Aira-Mānasadā[1] records the construction of a *maṇḍapa* for the lord Bhūtagrāhaka by a *dṛśīdhārikā* (female torch-bearer) of the king. Further, two inscriptions from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa belonging to the Ikṣvākus provide references to the construction of temples. The first, dated in the 16th regnal year of Ehavala Cāṁtamūla,[2] records the construction of a shrine (*devakula*) for Bhagavat Puṣpabhadrasvāmī and the erection of a *dhvajastaṁbha*, obviously in front of the same temple. The second,[3] dated in the 11th regnal year of Ehavalaśrī, records the construction of a temple for the god Sarvvadēva by Eliśrī, a *talavara-vara* (high dignitary) of the king. It describes the temple (*adhivāsa*) as *Śrī-viśāla*:

Elisṛīś=śrī-viśālaṁ śubhamatir=akarōt=Sarvvadēvādhivāsam.

In this context, the word *śrī-viśāla* may mean simply spacious, or it may be an appelation signifying a type of building. For, it is known that *viśāla* or *viśālaka* mean "a type of building, a class of pavilions, a type of hall; a type of rectangular building; a pavilion with 100 columns; a hall with 38 pillars."[4]

Although inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh during the subsequent four centuries provide general references regarding the construction of temples, they do not provide any interesting architectural data. Later, however, among the Eastern Calukya kings, Vijayāditya II (808-847) is credited with the construction of 108 Narendreśvara temples, the deity so named after his title *narendra-mṛgarāja (aṣṭōttara-śata-Narendreśvara-devālayānāṁ karttā)*.[5] Some inscriptions of the Kṛṣṇā, West Gōdāvarī and Guntūr Districts assignable to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries refer to temples as Narendreśvara, and these, in all probability, were among the temples constructed by Vijayāditya II. For example, the Vipparru (West Godāvarī District) inscription, engraved on a pillar in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Rājeśvara temple and dated 1198 A.D., records the establishment of a pillar and plastering the *maṇḍapa* of the temple of Narendreśvara-śrīmahādeva.[6] Three more inscriptions from the same place and dated 1299 A.D. record the setting up of pillars in different corners of the same *maṇḍapa*.[7] Another inscription,[8] also from the same place and bearing the same date, records the placement of the *śākhās* on the eastern gate *(tūrppu-vākili)* of this *maṇḍapa*.

Also referring to a temple of Narendreśvara is an epigraph from the Konakañcī (Kṛṣṇa District), engraved on a pillar in the Āñjaneya temple and

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belonging to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries.[9] It records the plastering of the temple and the shrines of the *parivāra-devatās* and consecration of Brahmā and Nārāyaṇa. This same temple later may have been converted to an Āñjaneya temple.

A Narendreśvara temple at Krāñja (modern Kāja in the Divi taluk, Kṛṣṇa District) is mentioned in five inscriptions,[10] from the Śrīkākuḷeśvara temple at Śrīkākuḷam (Divi taluk), dated from 1156 to 1158 A.D. It is not improbable that this temple also might have been constructed by Vijayāditya II.

Finally, five inscriptions from Kollūru (Guntūr District), engraved on pillars in the Anantabhogeśvara temple and belonging to the twelfth and thirteenth century,[11] record gifts made to temples of Narendreśvara-śrī-mahādeva at Kollūru. The temples are referred to in these and the other epigraphs as Narendreśvara must be examined to consider their possible construction during the time of Vijayāditya II.

Six inscriptions discussed below provide significant information pertaining to temple architecture and also commemorate the foundation of temples. Among the six, the Malayanūru (Anantapur District) epigraph of Mallidēvacōḍamahārāja, dated 1179 A.D., refers to the construction of a *pañcadevatā-devālaya.*[12] It states that the deities Mallikārjuna, Lakṣmaṇeśvara, Iruṁgoḷeśvara, Mahādeveśvara and Sūrya were consecrated and that the temple from the *taḷa* (i.e. *tala*) to *kaḷasa* (*kalaśa*) was constructed. Significantly this temple is known presently as *Aidudēvara-guḍi* which is a Kannada translation of *pañcadevatādevālaya.*

An inscription from Kontamakūru (Kṛṣṇā District), dated 1251 A.D.,[13] provides a rare reference to a circular *maṇḍapa.* It states that a certain Dāmayamantri who, according to the inscription, had an innovative mind, constructed a Śiva temple, embellished it with paintings and added a circular *maṇḍapa* to it (*maṁṭapaṁbu vilasanmati vṛttamugān=onarccuṭaṁ*).

Jayapa-senāni, a commander-in-chief under the Kākatīya king Gaṇapati, is known to have constructed the Coḍeśvara temple at Cebrolu (Guntūr District), set up golden pinnacles, and also built a spacious *maṇḍapa,* a *gopura* and a *prākāra.*[14]

Some inscriptions during the period under review provide more details regarding temple components. For example, the Munnanūru (Mahaboobnagar District) epigraph, dated 1468 A.D.,[15] presents the Vijayagopāla temple with all its magnificence. According to this record along with the temple were constructed a *garbha-mandira, antarāḷa, bhoga-maṇḍapa, nṛtya-maṇḍapa, nitya-sūri-maṇḍapa, kalyāṇamaṇḍapa, yāga-maṇḍapa, dhvaja-staṁbha, garuḍastaṁbha, dvāra, gopura, prākāra, Āñjaneyanivāsa* (i.e. shrine of Hanumāna) and a *puṣkariṇī* with a flight of steps constructed of hard stones (*dṛḍhaprastara-nirmita-sopāna-puṇya-puṣkariṇī*). Among the *maṇḍapas* mentioned above, the *nitya-sūrimaṇḍapa* is not mentioned in any other inscriptions or literature from Andhra Pradesh. Possibly discussions and discourses among the reputed scholars (*sūris*) took place in this *maṇḍapa.*

An inscription from Peda Kākāni (Guntūr District) dated 1518 A.D.,[16] records the construction of the Vīrabhadra temple consisting of a *garbhagṛha, antarāḷika, śikhara, maṇḍapa, prākāra, gopuras* and *kalyāṇavedī* and also the establishment of golden pinnacles by an official of Kṛṣṇadevarāya. The term *antarāḷika*, met with in some other inscriptions of this period, may mean a small *antarāḷa.*

Inscriptions also allude to the construction of Jaina temples in Andhra country, although not many records reveal architectural features of these Jaina temples. Thus the Amarāpuram (Anantapuram District) inscription[17] is unique in bringing to light architectural data of a Jaina temple proposed to be constructed. Dated 1277 A.D., this epigraph records the gift of an arecanut grove to the Brahmajinālaya with the stipulation that the *basadi* must be constructed with stone from *upāna* to *stūpī* and that longitudinally it must consist of a *mahāmaṇḍapa, bhadra, Lakṣmīmaṇḍapa, gopura, parisūtra, vandanamāle, mānastaṁbha, makaratoraṇa* and all the *vāhanas.* This inscription is engraved on a pillar set up in the courtyard of a ruined Jaina temple, evidently the one referred to in the inscription.

Inscriptions recording renovations to temples often help date portions of structures that appear stylistically later than the basic monument and confirms the fact that temples, once established, were often modified. For example, an inscription from Magatala (Mahboobnagar District), dated *c.* 1358 A.D.,[18] records the reconstruction of the temple of Svayaṁbhu-Mallināthadeva probably up to the *kalaśa* (*kaḷāśa-nirvāṇamu gānu*), with new bricks since the fabric of the original temple had become loose and begun to fall (*Magatala Śrī-Svayaṁbhu-Mallināthadēvara guḍi viṭṭika vaḍa viḍitēni*). Curious is the

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Juttiga (West Godavari District) epigraph, dated 1583 A.D.,[19] which records the renovation of the Vāsuki-Ravi-Someśvara and other temples at Dūtika (present Juttiga). They had fallen into ruins during the period of Ibrāhim Shāh (16th century) and were repaired by a private individual on the orders of Mohammad Quli, son of Ibrāhim Shāh, hence repairs to a Hindu temple at the behest of a Muslim.

In at least one case, existing parts of a temple were dismantled and new ones, with some additions, were constructed. The Maḍanūru (Nellore District) epigraph dated 1499 A.D.[20] states that Sāḷuva Timmarasu granted the village Maḍanūru for dismantling (*vicci*) the *ardhamaṇḍapa* and *garbhagṛha* of the Rāmeśvara temple of that village and for constructing the *śikhara, bhoga-maṇḍapa*, shrines of the *parivāra-devatas* and the *prākāra*.

After falling to ruins, the Bodhan (Nizamabad District) record of Someśvara I, dated 1056 A.D.,[21] states that the Indranārāyaṇa temple constructed at Bodhana by Rāṣṭrakūṭa Indra III (915–927 A.D.) was renovated by *perggaḍe* Jogapayya, who also set up the deity Viṣṇu and a *garutma-mānastaṁbha*. The pillar on which this inscription was engraved is presently in the Inspection Bungalow at Bodhan, although it was discovered by G. Yazdani in Deval Masjid in Bodhan, originally a Brahmanical temple of the ninth-tenth century and subsequently converted into a mosque by Muhammad Bin Tughlaq.[22]

Jāya-Senāni (thirteenth century) renovated and made additions to several temples in the village Cebrolu (Guntūr District). His inscription there[23] gives a detailed account of this activity: He provided all temples with new material from the stone brick (*śilēṣṭakā*) in the place of damaged ones; got the temples whitewashed; set up gold pinnacles; endowed metal images to the god and his two consorts; also got a high compound wall *(uccaṁ prākāraṁ), Śani* (i.e. *Śanivāra)-maṇḍapa* and a big three storyed tower (*mahat =tri-bhūmikaṁ*) constructed; had a *maṇḍapa* decorated with paintings depicting the fierce battles between the gods and demons built for god to rest after the sport of the "great hunt" celebrated every *makara-sankrānti* day; and newly consecrated the *liṅgas* of Mūlasthāna and Kāduveṭṭīśvara since both were desecrated by thieves.

The Vijayavāḍa (Kṛṣṇā District) inscription,[24] dated 1518 A.D., records conservation work done to the *garbhagṛha* and *antarāḷika* of the temple of Kanakadurgā and also additions to it. It states that the *garbhagṛha* and the *antarāḷa*, located in its front, both of which were constructed earlier, were conserved (*padilam śēyiṁcci*); a *raṅgamaṇḍapa*, measuring 9 *aṅkaṇas*, was constructed in its front; a *bhōga-maṇḍapa*, which it described as a *bhadra* and measuring 3 *aṅkaṇas*, was built in its front; further, a stone wall (*rāti gōḍa*) and a *pīṭha* were also constructed; the image of Keśava, recovered from the earth while constructing the *pīṭha*, (*pīṭhamu kaṭṭiṁciyappuḍu bhumilōnuṇḍi veḷḷan=ettina Kēśavanāthuni*), was consecrated.

In many cases a number of additions were made to the temples in course of time either to meet their growing need or to embellish the temples. For example, the Bhīmeśvara temple at Drākṣārāma (East Godāvarī District), famous for its architectural beauty, bears many inscriptions, some of which refer to additions and embellishments made to it. One of Kulōttunga-cōḍa Goṅka (1137–62 A.D.),[25] refers to the construction of a *kōṣṭhāgāra*, a *maṇḍapa* and of an image of a *dvāradāsa* (i.e. *dvārapālaka*). The same *kōṣṭhāgāra* and *maṇḍapa* are referred to as *koṭṭāra-maṇḍapa* and *Gāṅgēyarāya-maṇḍapa* respectively in an inscription dated 1142 A.D.[26] The Kona chief Mallideva's inscription,[27] dated 1195 A.D., states that Rājendracoḍai (1128–1135 A.D.) of the same family caused a *maṇḍapa* to be built of stone and named it *gaṇḍaveṇḍaḍuva-maṇḍapa*, after his own epithet. The *maṇḍapa* is described as having two wings (*dvibhuja*) and a compound wall.

The addition of eight *maṇḍapas* as well as some other structures to this temple by Anavemāreḍḍi is recorded in an inscription dated 1381 A.D.[28] In it he is said to have built a *nandi-maṇḍapa, dīpāvali-maṇḍapa, nāṭya-maṇḍapa, kalyāna-maṇḍapa, hōma-maṇḍapa, śanivāra-maṇḍapa, Gayā-maṇḍapa*, and *arka-maṇḍapa*, a *tirucuttumāliya* (i.e. circumambulatory passage), *divyaliṅgaṁbula guḍi* (shrines to the *liṅgas*), *vajraṁpu rā-koṭa* (compound wall stone which is plastered with *vajra*, a variety of lime), *gopura, pātāḷa-geha, sopāna, bhāṇḍāgāra, vividha-dhānyālayas* and *dvārakavāṭas*. In 1414 A.D. an *āsthāna-maṇḍapa*,[29] in 1427 A.D. a *mṛgayārāma-maṇḍapa*,[30] and three years later (1430 A.D.) an *udvāh-otsva-maṇḍapa* of stone[31] were also added to this temple. Finally, an inscription of 1428 records the construction of a 12-pillared stone *maṇḍapa* outside the eastern *gopura* on the banks of the Sapta-Godāvarī by Devaya Anna-mantri, a minister of Allāḍa-Vema.[32]

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Significantly, there is literary evidence which corroborates the above epigraphical information. The Telugu poet Śrīnātha, while describing the meritorious deeds of Anna-mantri in his work *Bhīmeśvara-purāṇamu*, states that he constructed a building (*dhāma*) in front of the main entrance (*mogali-vākili*) to the Bhīmeśvara temple apart from the *maṇḍapa* referred to above:[33]

Dakṣavātikayaṁdu Daruṇemdumauḷiki mogali-
vākiṭa dhāmamun raciṁce||
Brāg-diśā-vapra-gopura prāṁgaṇamuna
sapta-muni-siṁdhu-sopāna-saraṇi kalana
dīrce bhavanaṁbu Bhīmayadevu nagara
mantri Devaya yannayāmātya-varuḍu|

Thus it appears that the Bhīmeśvara temple contained at least 14 *maṇḍapas* built in the course of about three centuries.

The Śrīkūrmam temple is unique in that there the god is worshipped in the anthropomorphic form of tortoise. There three inscriptions refer to the construction of *maṇḍapas*, namely the *tiru-kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* (1245 A.D.),[34] *tiru-cuṭṭumālya-bhavana* (1283 A.D.)[35] and a *ḍolā-maṇḍapa* (1452 A.D.).[36] The second inscription also refers to the construction of a *nīla-śilāmaya-prāsāda*.

The *Vīra-śiro-maṇḍapa*, a *maṇḍapa* in which devotees offer their heads to god, was constructed in the Mallikārjuna temple at Śrīśaīlam by Anavema in 1377 A.D.[37]

Staṁbhair=ūrjitam=aṁga-paṁcakayutai=r=
aṣṭottara-triṁśato
madhye raṅga-śilā viśālam=upari pratvagra-pad-
māṁcitaṁ
bhadr-āṁkam-mukha-bhadra-toraṇayutaṁ sa
dvārapālāṁ sthiraṁ
Śrīsaile kṛtaṁ=Anna-bhūpatinā vīra-śiro-maṁ-
ḍapam||

In the inscription, it is described as *bhadra*, said to have consisted of thirty-eight pillars, a *raṅga-śilā* in the center with each edge decorated by the carvings of lotuses, a *mukhabhadra, toraṇa* and *dvārapālas*.

Magnificence and glory of monuments, for example a Śiva temple at Koṇḍaparti (Warangal District), can be estimated and the meaning and usage of technical terms can be examined from some inscriptions. There an epigraph of Kākatīya Gaṇapati, dated 1203 A.D.,[38] describes parts of this temple: the *prāsāda, śikhara, kalaśa, vimāna, sālabhañjikās, prākāra* and *antarāḷa*. It states that the *sālabhañjikās* were of various poses. The relevant portion of the verse reads:

yatr=ōtkīrṇaḥ karaṇa-kuśalaiḥ
śilpibhiḥ śālabhamjir=
nnānā=bhaṁgī-racana-rucirāḥ
kv=āpi pūrvvaṁ na dṛṣṭāḥ

A detailed picture of the *śri-vimāna* is presented in an inscription[39] from Tripurāntakam (Kurnool District), dated 1254 A.D.:

etat-śrī-vimānaṁ bahu-bharaṇa-yutaṁ
toran-adyai=r=vicitram
nīḍ-āḍhyaiḥ kūṭa-koṣṭhai=r=mṛgapati
vadanai=r=ghrāṇakhenāpi[40] yuktaṁ
Ānaṁd-ābde prāsādat Gaṇapati-nṛpater=
aśmabhiḥ śuddha-varṇair=
Viśveśācārya-sūnuś=sruti-vidham=atanot
Śāṁtaśaṁbhuḥ Purāreḥ||

The *śrī-vimāna* is said to have many *bharaṇas, toraṇas, nīḍas, kūṭa-koṣṭhas* and *siṁha-mukhas*. Rarely is there an inscription which gives so many details.

Temple inscriptions which merely record such details as dates of foundation provide one kind of information. But those which provide details of renovation and conservation and additions permit study of different parts of these temples from a new perspective.[41]

NOTES

1. D.C. Sircar, "Two Inscriptions from Guntur District," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXII (1957–58), pp. 82 ff. and plate.

2. D.C. Sircar and K.G. Krishnan, "Two Inscriptions from Nagarjunikonda," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIV (1961–62), pp. 17 ff. and plate.

3. B.Ch. Chhabra, "Nagarjunakonda Inscription of Ehavalasiri's Time, Year 11," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIII (1959–60), pp. 147 ff. and plate.

4. Prasanna Kumar Acharya, *A Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, Calcutta 1927, p. 556.

5. K. Lakshmana Rao, "Guṇaga Vijayādityuni

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Sātalūru Tāmra-Śāsanamu," *Bhārati* (Telugu), Vol. I, No. 1 (January, 1924), pp. 90 ff. and plate.

6. J. Ramayya Pantulu, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. X, (1948), No. 207.

7. *Ibid.*, Nos. 484–86.

8. *Ibid.*, No. 487.

9. *Ibid.*, No. 544.

10. H. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. IV (1923), Nos. 990–94.

11. Pantulu, ed., *S.I.I.*, Nos. 160, 184–85, 216 and 447.

12. R. Shama Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. IX, Part 1 (1939), No. 273.

13. Pantulu, ed., *S.I.I.*, No. 337.

14. F. Kielhorn, "Chebrolu Inscription of Jaya: Saka-Samvat 1157," *E.I.*, Vol. VI (1900–01), pp. 38 ff.

15. P. Srinivasachar, ed., *A Corpus of Inscriptions in the Telingana Districts of Andhra Pradesh*, Part III, Hyderabad 1956, No. Mn. 28.

16. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, No. 702.

17. Krishna Sastri, ed., *Annual Report on Epigraphy for 1917*, Madras 1917, No. 40, G. Jawaharlal, "Apurūpamaina Irugoṁḍadevacōḷa-mahārāju Jinaśāsanaṁ," *Bhārati*, Vol. 56, No. 5 (1979), pp. 33 ff. and plate.

18. Srinivasachar, ed., *Corpus of Inscriptions*, No. Mn. 20.

19. Pantulu, ed., *S.I.I.*, No. 749.

20. A. Butterworth and V. Venugopaul, *Inscriptions on Copper Plates and Stones in the Nellore District*, Part III, Madras 1905, pp. 1015 ff.

21. R. Narasimhacharya, ed., *Bodhan Stone Inscriptions of the Reign of Trailokyamalla* (Somesvara I), A.D. 1056, Hyderabad 1925. Also H.K. Narasimhaswamy, ed., *A.R.I.E.*, 1961–62, Delhi, No. B116 and also p. 19.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

23. E. Hultzsch, "Chebrolu Inscription of Jaya After Saka-Samvat 1135," *E.I.*, Vol. V (1898–90), pp. 142 ff.

24. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. IV, No. 789.

25. *Ibid.*, No. 1140.

26. *Ibid.*, No. 1142. The word *koṭṭāra* is a regular Dravidian *tadbhava* of *kōṣṭhāgāra, Gāṅgeyarāya*, in the name *Gāṅgeyarāyamaṇḍapa*, is a known epithet of Kulōttuṅgacōḍa-Goṅka.

27. Hultzsch, "Pithapuram Pillar Inscription of Mallideva and Manmasatya II; Śaka-Samvat 1117," *E.I.*, Vol. IV (1896–97), pp. 83 ff.

28. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. IV, No. 1379.

29. Hultzsch, "Three Inscriptions of Kataya Vema; Śaka Samvat 1313, 1336 and 1338," *E.I.*, Vol. IV (1896–97), pp. 329 ff.

30. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. IV, No. 1353.

31. *Ibid.*, No. 1383.

32. *Ibid.*, No. 1381.

33. *Bhīmeśvara-purāṇamu* (Telugu), Madras 1958, Canto I, verse 75.

34. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. V, No. 1305.

35. *Ibid.*, No. 1179.

36. *Ibid.*, No. 1201.

37. Pantulu, *ed.*, *S.I.I.*, No. 599.

38. N. Venkataramanayya, ed., *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh Warangal District*, Hyderabad 1974, No. 48.

39. Pantulu, ed., *S.I.I.*, No. 345.

40. The reading *vadanai* [*rprā*]*ṇakhēnāpi* given in Pantulu appears to be wrong.

41. I sincerely thank my teacher Dr. K.V. Ramesh, Superintending Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India, who has kindly gone through my paper and made invaluable suggestions.

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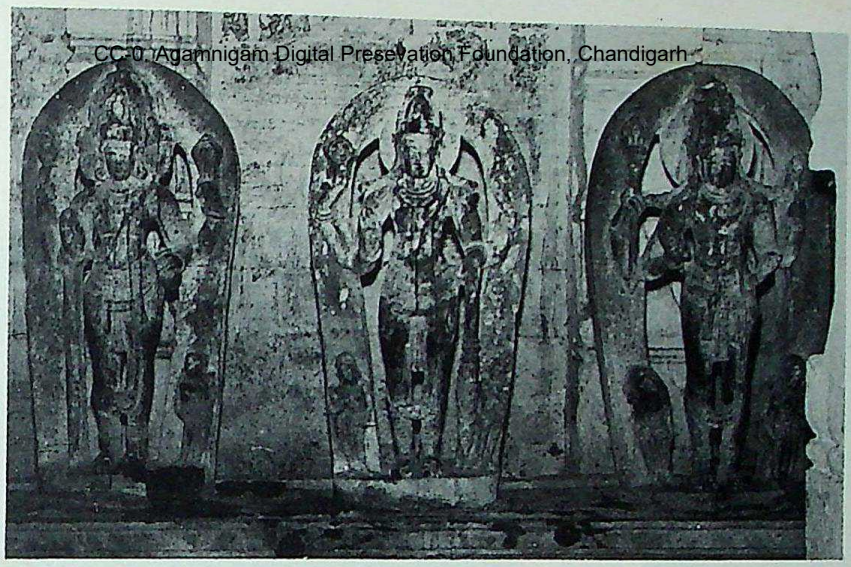

Plate 208. Belur. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara in the *garbhagṛha* of the Traipuruṣa devālaya.

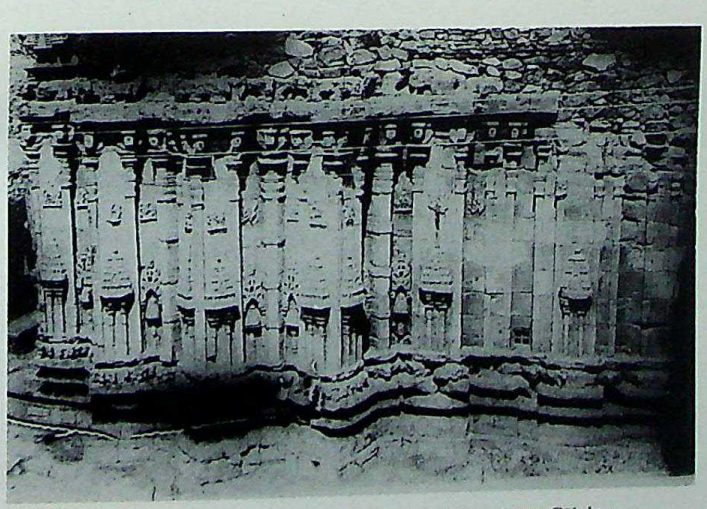

Plate 209. Savadi. Brahmeśvara temple, *vimāna*. Later Cālukya. *c.* late 11th century. A.D.

Plate 210. Savadi. Brahmeśvara temple, Brahmā of the Traipuruṣas in the *garbhagṛha*.

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Plate 211. Savadi. Brahmeśvara temple, Viṣṇu of the Traipuruṣas in the *garbhagṛha*.

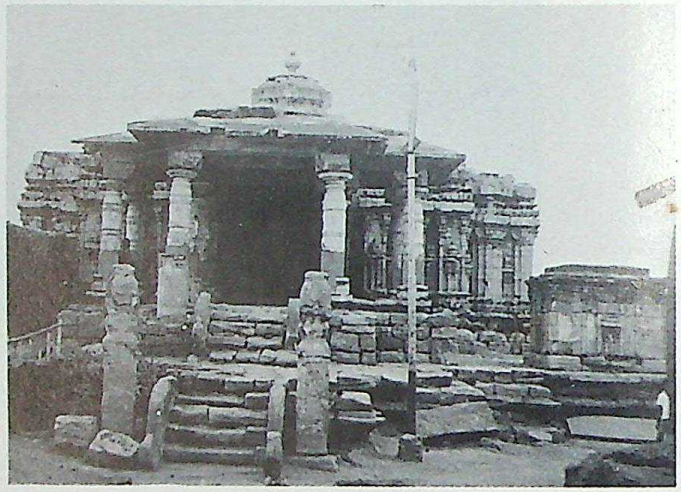

Plate 212. Suḍi. Mallikārjuna temple, from east. Later Rāṣṭrakūṭa or early Cālukya. *c.* latter half of the 10th century A.D.

Plate 213. Suḍi. Mallikārjuna temple, Umā-Maheśvara in the northern *garbhagṛha*.

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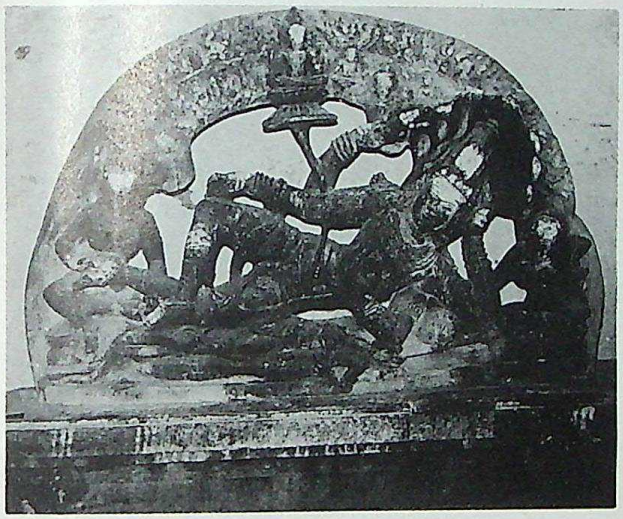

Plate 214. Suḍi. Mallikārjuna temple, Anantaśāyī in the southern *garbhagṛha*.

Plate 216. Ron. Somaliṅga temple, *pīṭha* with three *vāhanās* and sockets.

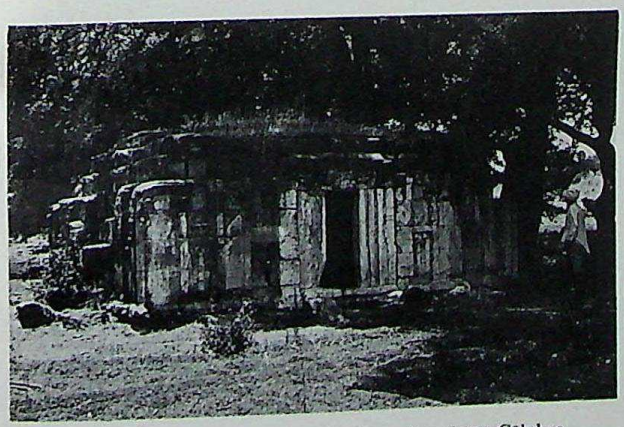

Plate 215. Ron. Somaliṅga temple, front view. Later Cālukya. *c.* 10th-11th century A.D.

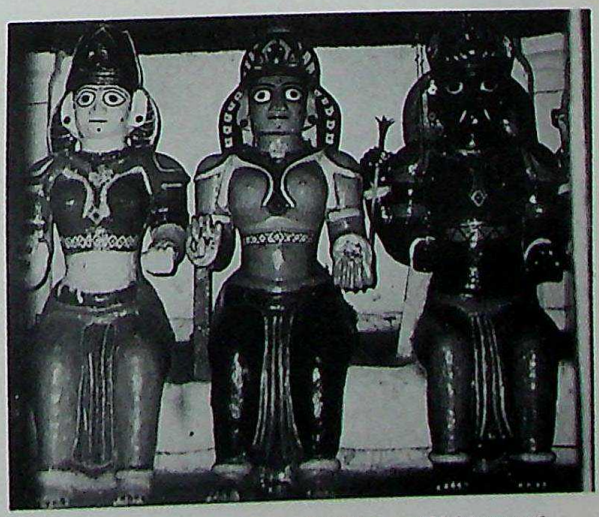

Plate 217. Gauja. Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī and Mahāsarasvatī.

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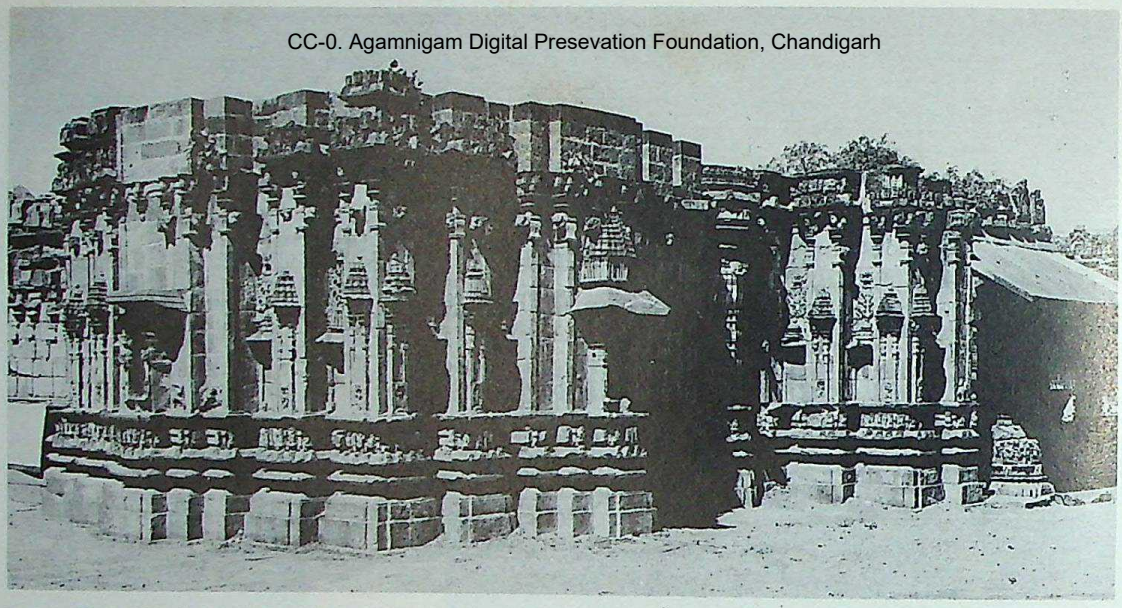
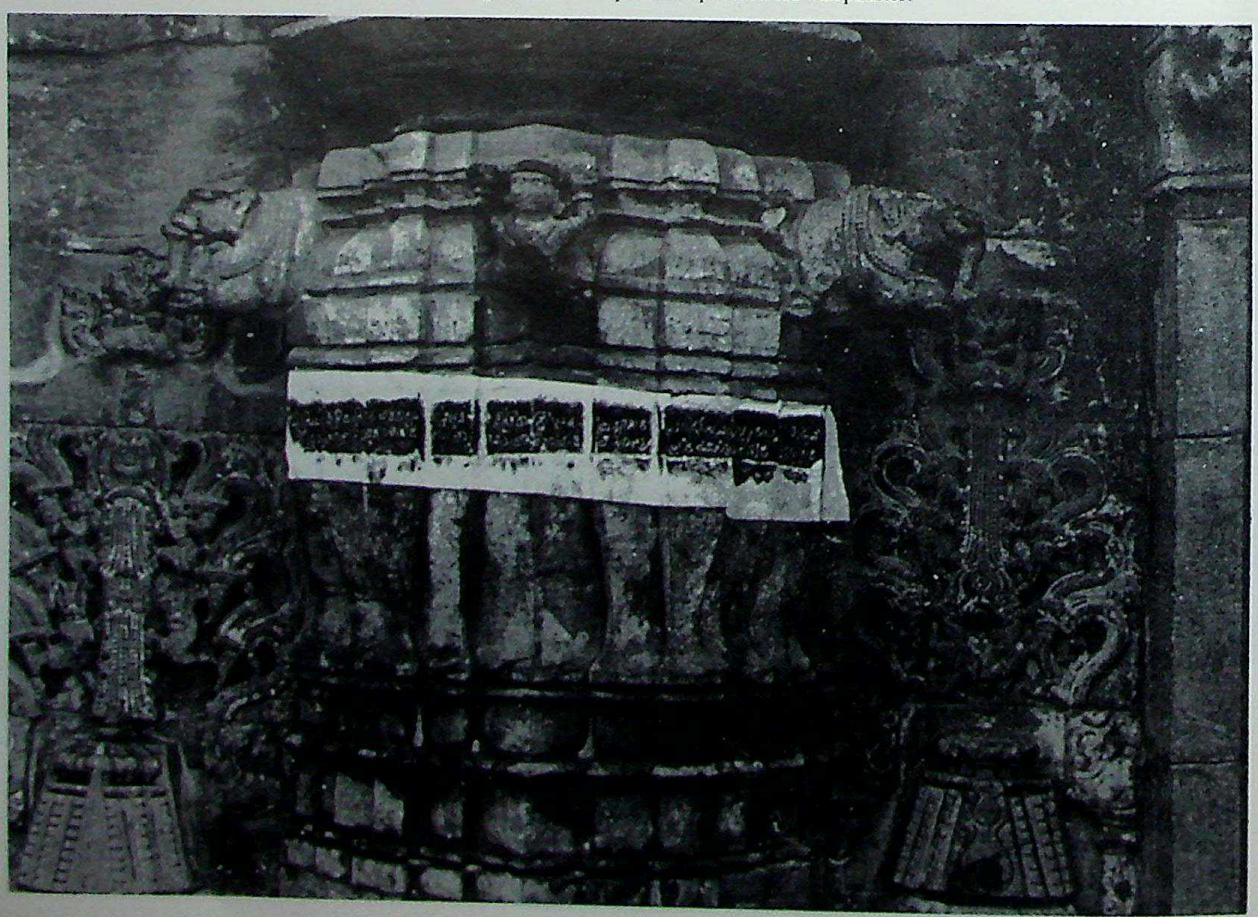


Plate 218. Gadag. Sarasvatī temple, general view. Later Karṇāṭa style, later Cālukya, period of Vikramāditya VI. *c.* A.D. 1100. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 219. Gadag. Sarasvatī temple. Inscription on the wall pilaster.



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34

The Author of Māmallapuram Monuments: A Fresh Look

R. NAGASWAMY

VIEWS REGARDING the dating of Māmallapuram (Mahāmallapura, *mod.* Mahābalipuram) monuments, fall into two schools, the first assigning the monuments to a succession of Pallava rulers, and the second believing that all the monuments were the creations of a single ruler, Rājasiṁha. My approach to resolve the debate is quite simple. To understand the authorship of the monuments at Māmallapuram, one must first come to terms with the inscriptions found on the Atiraṇacaṇḍa cave temple at Śāḷuvaṇkuppam. Some scholars hold that the cave was in existence before Rājasiṁha, who appropriated the monument and inscribed the record. It is, however, a foundation record, and no evidence exists to suggest that the cave dates prior to Rājasiṁha's time.

At Māmallapuram there is such a variety of monuments in terms of plan, elevation, and sculptural ordinance that the choice of each must have been deliberate, not due to gradual evolution. Moreover, it is evident that the work was in progress simultaneously on all the monuments, and a number of artists were working there at the same time. The minor differences in style thus do not indicate an evolution through time.

In studying the epigraphs at Māmallapuram, it must be decided whether one and the same title or cognomen (*biruda*) could have been borne by many rulers. Several instances could be cited in favor of such an assumption. But in those cases, significant titles in places other than the disputed ones also occur. This is not the case with the title Atyantakāma, inscribed on Māmallapuram monuments.

The following observations will shed light on patronage of the Māmallapuram monuments:

1. They are essentially religious edifices. As seen from the records describing them as Atyantakāma Pallavēśvaragṛham, Kṣatriyasiṁha-Pallavēśvaragṛham, Rājasiṁha Pallavēśvaragṛham, and Paramēśvara-Mahāvarāha-Viṣṇugṛham.
2. They reveal an author who possessed strong aesthetic sensitivity and tremendous love for variety.
3. They were guided by *āgamas* and *vāstu* texts which prescribe specific layouts and elevations.

That sensitive author of all the Māmallapuram monuments must have been Rājasiṁha. No other ruler of India has left behind over 300 titles of himself. These titles reveal his longings, desires and personality. In fact, his inscription at Kāñcī reveals that he wanted to usher in the very Kṛtayuga in this land:

Kṛtayugaṁ aparaṁ Nirmimano Mahēndram.

He reconstituted the *ghaṭikā* of *dhvijas* at Kāñcī, says the Velūrpaḷayam record. His great devotion to Śiva and his dedication to the Vedic path is repeatedly reflected in his writings.

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An oft-repeated verse found at Māmallapuram reads:

> Abhiṣeka jalapūrṇe Citra ratnāmbuja kare
> aṣṭe viśāle sumukhaḥ śiraḥ sarasi Śaṅkaraḥ
>
> *S.I.I.*, Vol. I, Inscription No. 19

In describing the nature of the Rājasūya, the Yajurveda (third hymn of sixth *Prapāṭhaba*, fifth *kāṇḍa*) enjoins that one who performs Rājasūya conquers both the worlds, echoing the verse: *abhisheka jala pūrṇe*.

In view of the ruler's attachment to the Vedas, certain hymns seem to have influenced his thinking, notably the eleventh hymn of the fourth *prapāṭhaba* of the fifth *kāṇḍa* of the *Taitriya Yajurvēda Saṁhita*, which mentions *paśukāma, svargakāma, annakāma*, and *grāmakāma*. The same Vedic hymn also shows that those who yearn for the fulfillment of prayers, like food, villages, leadership or heaven should perform sacrifices at altars prepared in different forms. The forms thus represented are square, triangle, the charriot, the wheel and the eagle. This shows that religious edifices in different shapes were preferred for different prayers in the Vedic period itself. In these forms, *droṇacita* (apsidal), *rathacakra-cita* (wheel shape), *syenacita*, and *ravega* (triangle) are mentioned.

Also in this hymn, the words *annakāma, svargakāma* and *grāmakāma* recall the title Atyantakāma of Māmallapura and the various forms of architecture he provided. They also clarify the meaning of the title Atyantakāma. The edifices were probably intended as dedicatory ones as indicated by the first verse in the inscriptions of some of them:

> Saṁbhava sthiti saṁhāra kāraṇam vitakaraṇaḥ
> Bhūyāt atyantakāmāya jagataṁ omanarādhanaḥ

This is a pious wish that all the desires of the world should be fulfilled.

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35

Traipuruṣa Dēvālayās in Inscriptions and Related Temples in Dharwad-Bijapur Region

A. SUNDARA

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

USUALLY, UNTIL *c.* ninth century A.D., temples are one-shrined. Thereafter double-shrined (*dvikūṭa*) temples are encountered, generally for Śiva and Sūrya or Viṣṇu and triple-shrined (*trikūṭa*) for Brahmā or Sūrya, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, or for Śiva-*liṅgas* under various names (collectively Trikūṭeśvara), or for Viṣṇu in different forms (*catuṣkūṭa, pañcakūṭa*). In inscriptions between the ninth and eleventh centuries A.D., a temple enshrining Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara is usually described as a Traipuruṣa, Tripuruṣa, or Trimūrti Dēvālayā. Such inscriptions are relatively many in the region comprising the north-eastern, eastern, major lower and northwestern parts of Dharwad, Bijapur, Gulbarga and Raichur Districts and adjacent areas. K.G. Krishnan[1] has earlier given a succinct but scholarly account of the Traipuruṣa and Trikūṭa cults in Karnataka, based exclusively on inscriptions. The present paper examines the relevant parts of the inscriptions and some of the related monuments in this territory.

I

Three inscriptions show that the Traipuruṣa were conceived as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, not just any set of three deities. First among these there is one on a pillar at Salotgi[2] (Indi Taluka, Bijapur District), an ancient *agrahāra* in Karṇpurī Viṣaya—a part of the bigger division in Tardavāḍi-1,000. It narrates that in 945 A.D. Gajāṅkuśa Nārāyaṇa, a minister to Kṛṣṇa III, a poet and pious man, constructed a *śālā* presided over by Traipuruṣa. But the *śālā* was declining by the eleventh century, for according to an inscription of that time,[3] Kañceng of the Selāra family, a native of Kōpaṇapura, took pride in reviving it and renovating the hall. Another inscription[4] of 1129 A.D. is important as it elaborates the expression Traipuruṣa of the *śālā*.[5]

At Nidgundi, an inscription[6] in front of the Nārāyaṇadeva temple dated Śaka 996/1074 A.D., speaks of the construction of a *Tripurusanivāsam* by Daṇḍanāyaka Jannamayya for a *śāla* during the reign of Bhuvanaikamalla, i.e. Someśvara II. The invocation is appropriately to Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara and Ambhōjāsana, i.e. Brahmā. The gods are described as *Satvarajas-tamōguṇadhārateyiṁ jagasthiti samudbhava saṁhṛti hetu.*

Finally among the three, an inscription from Alūr begins with an invocation to Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva and mentions *Hari-Hara Hiraṇyagarbhāya namaḥ* at the end.[7] The Tripuruṣa *devatāyana* was built in 1091 A.D. by Lenka Mahādevayya *nāyaka*, a subordinate of the king Vikramāditya VI.

Inscriptions from Navali and Javur (Lingsugur Taluka, Raichur District) record grants to existing Traipuruṣa *devālayās*. For example, one such shrine

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is mentioned in an inscription of 1135 A.D. at Navali,[8] while at Javur an inscription records a grant to the Traipuruṣa *devālyā* by Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Jōgappayya.[9] Although no remains of the Traipuruṣa temple are today found at this latter site, an ancient early tenth-century temple of Śiva, locally called Rāmalingēśvara, still stands.[10]

Inscriptions from Ballatgi[11] (Manvi Taluka, Raichur District), Tungi[12] (Muddebihal Taluka, Bijapur District), and Mulgund[13] (Gadag Taluka) all refer to the construction of Traipuruṣa temples. The first, of the reign of Jagadekamalla (Jayasiṁha II), speaks of the installation of Traipurusadeva at Ballaniṭṭage by Queen Mahādevī in Śaka 944/1022 A.D. The inscription from Mulgund, an *agrahāra*, speaks of the consecration of Traipuruṣadeva and the foundation of the temple and *maṭha* (monastery) in 1028 A.D. by Nāgasvāmi. The inscription from Tuṅgi dated 1086 A.D. is a land grant to the Traipuruṣadeva of the *śālā* by Nimbaṇṇa, the *daṇḍanāyaka* of Tribhuvanamalla (Vikramāditya VI).

Two more inscriptions, one from Kondguli and the other from Almel, both in Sindgi Taluka, Bijapur District, mention grants made to Traipuruṣa *dēvālayās*. That Kondguli was an *agrahāra* is referred to in four inscriptions[14] there dated between 1107 and 1132.

II

The Śivayogīśvara in Salotgi,[15] and the tank nearby are located in an area believed to be the spot where the ancient *śālā* and its Traipuruṣa temple existed. The stone doorframe of the eastern *mahādvāra* of the *prākāra* (enclosure) of the temple is of *c.* tenth century A.D. The doorframe indicates the existence of a temple which is probably the Traipuruṣa temple of the inscription of *c.* 945 A.D.

How a *śāla* with the Traipuruṣas appeared can, however, be apprehended from a less known temple in Belur, located some 12 km south of Bādāmi. The temple is a large but plain structure, stylistically of the latter part of the ninth century A.D.[16] It possesses sculptures of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara in a row on a single oblong *pīṭha* measuring 3.0×0.32 m (Plate 208) with their respective *vāhanas* on the frontal side in an oblong *garbhagṛha* (4.15×3.00 m). The sculptures, all of equal height and width (1.05×0.67 m), are almost in the round and are accompanied by their consorts. Their *prabhāvali* is plain. The other parts of the temple are: a spacious *raṅgamaṇḍapa* (12.50 m square) with 16 pillars, an *ardhamaṇḍapa* (6.25 m square) with four pillars, a noteworthy feature, and an *antarāla* (3.08 m square) leading to the *garbhagṛha*. The walls are severely plain; the doorframes show Gajalakṣmī as the *lalāṭabiṁba*. Originally, the temple did not have superstructure over the *garbhagṛha*. The *mukhamaṇḍapa* is no longer extant. No inscription referring to the construction of this building has been traced.

An inscription[17] dated 1431 A.D., during the time of the Vijayanagara emperor Devarāya II, on a pillar of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* of the Brahmeśvara temple[18] in Savadi (Ron Taluka, Dharwad District), refers to the renovation of the temple as *Saiviḍiya Traimurtigaḷige jīrṇa udāra*. The pillared *maṇḍapa* was evidently added to the original building in the course of the renovation. Besides this pillared *maṇḍapa*, the temple has an *antarāla* and a *garbhagṛha* which is stellate in plan (Figure 1; Plate 209), somewhat similar to that, of the Cennakeśvara temple in Belur, and oblong. On an elongated *pīṭha* inside are the sculptures of Brahmā (Plate 210) and Viṣṇu (Plate 211) at the extremities and a *liṅga* in the middle that appears to have replaced the original sculpture of Maheśvara. On the upper portion of the temple wall are miniature bas-reliefs representing primarily Śaiva deities. In view of the architectural features, the temple is probably datable to the late eleventh century A.D.

One of the two inscriptions (Śaka 980/1058 A.D.) on a pillar in front of Mallikārjuna temple at Sūdi probably refers to Traipuruṣadeva.[19] The Mallikārjuna temple[20] looking east (Plate 212) is a *trikūṭācala* building placed over a *jagatī*-platform. The western *garbhagṛha* alone possesses a superstructure of the Dravida type, the other two *garbhagṛhas* being flat-roofed. In the northern *garbhagṛha* is a graceful sculpture of Umā-Maheśvara (Plate 213), and in the southern one is Viṣṇu Anantaśāyī with small bas-reliefs of the first six *avatāras* only on the top edge (Plate 214). In the western one is a *liṅga*. In the front, at the northeast corner of the platform, is a small shrine. The temple and the icons appear to be datable to the latter half of the tenth century A.D.

There also are Trikūtācala temples with two *liṅgas* and a sculpture of Viṣṇu. For instance, an inscription of 1184 A.D. from Minajgi speaks of the construction of a *trikūta* temple having two *liṅgas* named Māceśvara and Mallikārjuna provided by Mācarasa, the *prabhu* of *mahāgrāma Miṇinjige*.[21]

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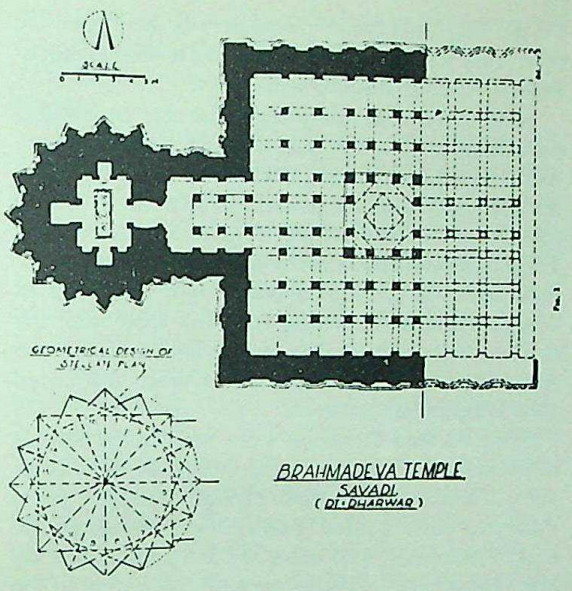

Figure 1. Savadi. Brahmeśvara temple, ground plan.

Two inscriptions from Gadag, both located near the temple of Śrī Vīra-Nārāyaṇa, speak about the grant of land and gold to a Traipuruṣadevālaya;[22] one dates 1037 A.D., and the other dates *c.* thirteenth century. The first gift is by Dāmodaraseṭṭi, whose father, Perggaḍe Dhoyipayya, built this temple and set up a Garuḍa-*stambha*. Today no corresponding temple survives. However, a close examination of the architecture of the famous and extensive Trikūṭeśvara temple complex reveals that the original small temple was subsequently enlarged into the present form.[23] The oldest parts are the *garbhagṛha* and the *antarāla* of *c.* tenth century A.D. To this were added a pillared *raṅgamaṇḍapa* that was intended to have *pārśva-catuṣkīs* on the east and south as in the case of the Someśvara temple of the same place. But before the completion of the construction, the plan apparently was revised and enlarged by adding a *garbhagṛha*, an *antarāḷa* and a very spacious heavily pillared *mukharaṅgamaṇḍapa*, in the place of the intended *mukhamaṇḍapa* on the east. The added *garbhagṛha* has inside a *pīṭha* with the relief of seven horses and Aruṇa which must have supported a Sūrya image. These additions probably were made in the latter part of eleventh century A.D. A little later another shrine was asymmetrically added to the nothern wall of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa*, and finally, during the Vijayanagara period, the original *garbhagṛha* and *antarāla* were enclosed by walls providing a closed *pradakṣiṇāpatha* that can be used (Figure 2). The northwest corner of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is converted into a small shrine with an oblong *pīṭha* supporting three low hemispherical *liṅgas*. Similarly in the original *garbhagṛha* is an oblong *pīṭha* with three *liṅgas*, peculiar since they are known as Trikūṭeśvara.

Of the eight twelfth- and thirteenth-century inscriptions referring to the various grants made to Trikūṭeśvara,[24] six are in the *prākāra* of the temple. Only one, of 1225 A.D., chronologically the last, is engraved on a pillar of the temple's *maṇḍapa*.

Trikūṭeśvara may represent three Śiva *liṅgas* as is learnt from the invocation in a fragmentary inscription of *c.* twelfth century A.D. in Hire-Handigol (Gadag Taluka)[25] located in front of Amareśvara temple. It praises Trikūṭeśvara as *Jagajjanakaṁ purusārthatrayamuṁ Śrutitrayamuṁ śrīmatrimūrttitvamuṁ Haraliṅgakritiyādavōl tarade mūrulingavādaṁ manoharadāguttiralā sayambhuge jagaṁ Śrīmatrikūteśvaroddhura Punyaṁ Kamaniye maymavadedaṁ śrīmatrikūteśvaraṁ*. From this description it is clear that the three objects of worship installed in the temple were all *liṅgas*.

Since inscriptions show that Trikūta temples are triple-shrined, the temple in Gadag now known as Trikūṭeśvara, originally with only one shrine, but subsequently with a second shrine dedicated to Sūrya and three *liṅgas* on the same *pīṭha* always could not have been called Trikūṭēśvara. The original Trikūṭēśvara temple must have been a triple shrined Śiva temple. It is, therefore, relevant to consider the peculiar triple-shrine temple[26] looking north (Figure 3) located just south of the present Trikūṭeśvara. It is a severely plain temple consisting of a four-pillared *raṅgamaṇḍapa* with three small oblong *garbhagṛhas* on the east, south and west sides. Could this be the Trikūṭēśvara of the inscriptions? If the answer is in the affirmative, then the original part of the present Trikūṭeśvara of the early tenth century having an oblong *garbhagṛha* in all probability was the Traipuruṣa *devālaya* referred to first in the inscription of 1037 A.D.

From Ron, an ancient *mahāgrahāra*,[27] nearly a dozen inscriptions are reported. In the village presently are nine temples,[28]most of them dedicated to Śiva. Among them, the one locally known as Sōmaliṅga was probably a Traipuruṣa shrine. The temple, with two *garbhagṛhas*, each with an *antarāla* on the east and west of the central *raṅgamaṇḍapa* (Plate 215), faces south; in the southern wall of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* is a recess (1.45 m long and 1.05 m deep), a peculiar feature. Behind it, in the field, was found a

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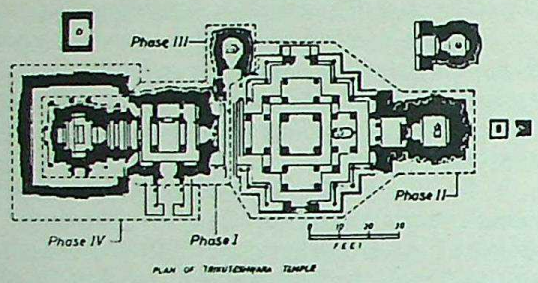

Figure 2. Gadag. Trikūṭeśvara temple, ground plan.

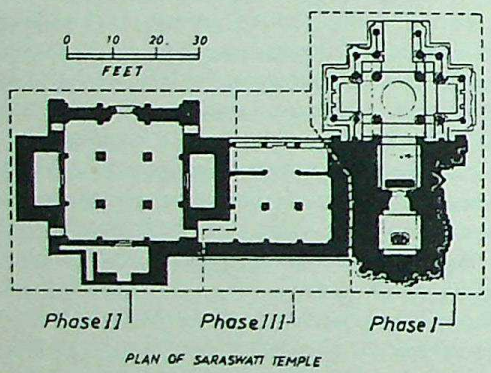

Figure 3. Gadag. Sarasvatī and the adjoining temple, ground plan.

moulded *pīṭha*[29] (Plate 216) with three sockets and three reliefs of a haṁsa, Garuḍa and Naṅdi on the front side, indicating that it is the *pīṭha* of Traipuruṣa-deva.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

The above survey indicates that the Traipuruṣas invariably meant the Trimūrti: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara. The three gods, including Śiva, are usually delineated in anthropomorphic form.

Traipuruṣa temples were frequently constructed during the ninth to eleventh centuries, almost invariably in *agrahāras* and in association with *śālās*. The association is probably meant to convey the idea of devotion of knowledge seekers that is versified later: *Gurur-Brahmā gurur-Viṣṇuḥ gurudēvō Maheśvaraḥ/ Guru-ssākṣāt parabrahma tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ/ /*

The Traipuruṣa cult had become so popular that even on the tenth-century Virgals in this area, there are fine bas-reliefs of Brahmā, Tāṇḍaveśvara Śiva and Viṣṇu, for example those from Ron[30] and Gadag. On the Virgals of the following period, there is almost invariably a *liṅga* being worshipped by a *muni* apparently of the Kālāmukha sect.

As known from inscriptions, the area comprising the southwestern, the northeastern, and the northwestern parts of Bijapur, Dharwad and Raichur Districts had more *agrahāras* during the ninth to twelfth centuries A.D. than the other areas of Karnataka. The Traipuruṣa *devālayas* are concentrated in this area. Although the celebrated Nāgai *agrahāra*, with its Traipuruṣa temple, is away from this focal area, it is close to Mānyakheṭa (Malkheḍ), where, during the Rāṣṭrakrakūṭa period, *agrahāras* were associated with Traipuruṣa *devālayas*.

The Bādāmi Calukyas were responsible for the introduction of the Traipuruṣa cult. They were originally Vaiṣṇavas, but their capital, Bādāmi, was a Pāśupata Śaiva center. Earlier they subjugated the early Kadambas, who seem to have popularized the Harī-Hara cult[31] and also expressed devotion to the god Brahmā.[32] And they conquered the western coastal region where the worship of Brahmā was prevalent from about the fifth century A.D. In one of the ceilings of the Viṣṇu *layaṇa* (Bādāmi cave III, 578 A.D.) of Maṅgaleśa, who was *parama-Bhāgavata*, are graceful reliefs of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Umā-Maheśvara, a representation earlier than the Mandagapaṭṭu trinity *maṇḍapa* of Pallava Mahendravarmā I (*c.* 580–630 A.D.). In fact, in the ceilings and lintels of many of the Bādāmi Calukyan temples occur bas-reliefs of the Trimūrtis, for example the Kunti temple (Kuntigudi temple 1) Aihole, and the Kadasiddheśvara at Pattadakal. Eventually, in 699 A.D., Vijayāditya provided a three-shrined flat-roofed temple and installed shrines Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara,[33] thus making this the earliest example of the Traipuruṣa *devālaya*, in "Vātāpyadhiṣṭhāna" (Bādāmi). The temple, now locally called Jambuliṅga, was flourishing much later, for a worn out Kannada inscription of *c.* twelfth century A.D. there refers to *Hari-Hara Brahmā . . . śvara*.[34] In the western *garbhagṛha* there remains a *liṅga* on a moulded *pīṭha*, but the other two *garbhagṛhas* are now empty.

The rock-cut *pīṭha* in the *garbhagṛha* of Maṅgaleśa's Viṣṇu *layaṇa*, originally had a Viṣṇu sculpture only, but probably in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period it was enlarged by adding two rectangular blocks one on either side, having mouldings on the sides similar to that of the original and with a socket on the top central. The enlarged *pīṭha* was meant to receive

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three icons, presumably of Brahmā and Maheśvara at the extremities, the original central icon being Viṣṇu. Thus the Viṣṇu *layaṇa* was converted into Traipuruṣa *layaṇa*.

The Traipuruṣa cult eventually provided a foundation for the development of Dattātreya in this region in about the twelfth and thirteenth century A.D. In Dattātreya temples, the icon is *caturbhuja* Viṣṇu seated in *padmāsana* with *śaṅkha* and *cakra* in the upper hands the lower hands in *yogamudrā* and with three *vāhanas*, namely Naṅdi, Garuḍa and a haṁsa on the front side of the *pīṭha*.

The worship of Āditya, Viṣṇu and Śiva, occasionally described as Traipuruṣa, also developed from the Traipuruṣa cult. In Malaghan (Sindgi), the Basavaṇṇa temple, triple shrined according to the eleventh-century inscription,[35] and possessing basreliefs of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and a *liṅga*, probably had Ādityadeva, Keśavadeva, and Vāmeśvara in the *garbhagṛhas*. Another inscription of the same year at Malaghan refers to "Traipuruṣadeva." Since all the other extant temples there are Śaiva and single shrined, the Traipuruṣadeva of the Malaghan inscription likely were the three gods of the Basavaṇṇa temple.

Yet another cult, that of Trikūṭeśvara, seems to have originated from Traipuruṣadeva. The invocation of the inscription from Hire Handigol indicates this development when it declares *Śrīmat-trimūrtitvamuṁ Haraliṅgākrityadavol tarade mūru-liṅgavādaṁ*. There are triple shrined temples with only *liṅgas* in the *garbhagṛhas*, as stated in an inscription from Haralahalli (Haveri Taluka, Dharwad District). The inscription refers to a temple with Vikrameśvara, Somanātha and Guṭṭeśvara at Goṭṭagaḍi that was built by Joyideva.[36]

This development probably results from the ascendancy of the Kālāmukha Śaivas as teachers and royal priests in charge of the *agrahāras* and temples between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries. It also accounts for the gradual disappearance of Traipuruṣa.

There was a corresponding deep impact on the development of the medieval Viṣṇu cult under the Hoysaḷas and of the Śakti cult in the Malnaḍ and coastal regions. The celebrated triple shrined Keśava temple in Somanāthapura has images of Govinda, Keśva temple and Veṇugōpāla in the *garbhagṛhas*, all of which are forms of Viṣṇu. Similarly, in the Malnaḍ and coastal regions, where the Śakti cult was popular, the image delineated in the forms of Durgā, Mahākālī, Mahākālī or frequently Mahiṣāsuramardinī up to 13th century A.D. began to be represented in three manifestations: Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī and Mahāsarasvatī (Plate 217) corresponding to the Śaktis of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. She is so manifest in the temples at Gauja (Shimoga District) and Barkur (South Kanara District).

Finally, the Traipuruṣa temples may have a single *garbhagṛha*, which is necessarily oblong and enshrines sculptures of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara on the same elongated *pīṭha* as in Belur, Savadi and Ron. Alternatively, the temples may have three distinct shrines, each enshrining one image of the three gods, as at Bādāmi and Nidugundi. The latter type gave rise to Trikūṭācala form of temple architecture.

NOTES

I am thankful to Archaeological Survey of India and the University Grants Commission for giving me opportunity and financial assistance for the field work; to Shri K.G. Krishnan for giving me his valuable paper on the subject and to Dr. S.H. Ritti for drawing my attention to a few important inscriptions and to Smt. Bhagyalakshmi Sundara for neatly typing the manuscript of my article.

1. K.G. Krishnan, "Traipuruṣa-Trikūṭa Cults in Karnataka," *Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society*, Vol. LV, Pt. 2 (1964), pp. 53–56.
2. F. Kielhorn and H. Sastri, "Salotgi Pillar Inscriptions," *E.I.*, Vol. IV (1895), pp. 57–66.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
4. *Annual Report of South Indian Epigraphy for the Year 1933–34*, Nos. 153–154.
5. *Ibid.*, Nos. 54–56. Being pleased with "*Dharmasya vidyānāṁ sthānaṁ, sūrikiranaḥ Brahmā Viṣṇu Maheśvānaṁ śāla tatrātiśalinī Mēroḥ prītiṁ parityajya yatra sākṣat Vasantite*,"[5] the gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara, not finding pleasure in the mount Meru, came down and settled there.
6. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XV, No. 2.
7. *Ibid.*, Pt. 2, No. 136.

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8. *A.R.I.E.* 1958–59. No. 712.
9. *Ibid.*, No. 693.
10. Explored by me in Nov. 1976.
11. *A.R.I.E.* 1961–62, No. 534.
12. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 2, No. 129.
13. *Ibid.*, Vol. XX, Nos. 67, 92, 143, and K.V. Ramesh, "Kondguli Inscription of Bhulokamalla, Year 7," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXVII (1967–68), p. 189–192.
14. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XX, Nos. 67, 92, 143. And Ramesh, "Kondguli Inscription," pp. 189–192.
15. As Technical Assistant of the Archaeological Survey of India, southwestern circle, under the project of the village-to-village survey of antiquarian remains, I explored this village in 1958.
16. I carried out an on-the-spot study of the temple in July 1976. *See* A. Sundara, "Kelavu ichina gamanārha purātattva śōdhanegaḷu," *Karnataka Bharati*, Vol. 9, Pt. 2 (1977), pp. 90–91, Plate 3, 1.
17. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XV, No. 246.
18. Studied in the course of my explorations in 1964. *See* A. Sundara, "Some Temples of North Dharwar District and the Hoysala Architecture," *The Journal of Karnatak University* (Social Sciences), Vol. IX (1973), pp. 107–109, Fig. 2.
19. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 1, No. 93.
20. A. Sundara, "Some Temples of North Dharwar," pp. 110–111.
21. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XV, No. 58.
22. *Ibid.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 1, No. 72 and *ibid.*, Vol. XV, No. 621.
23. A. Sundara, "Gadaga-Betageriyalliruva Prācīna Devālayagaḷu," *Namma Gadaga-Betageri*, Gadag 1975, pp. 465–487, Fig. 11.
24. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 2, Nos. 150, 207; Vol. XV, No. 547; *E.I.*, Vol. III, p. 217; *S.I.I.*, Vol. XV, Nos. 208, 214, 259 and 609.
25. *Karnatak Inscriptions*, Vol. V (1969), pp. 303–04.
26. A. Sundara, "Gadaga-Belageriyalliruva," Fig. 2.
27. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 1, No. 59.
28. Studied by me in 1964.
29. Discovered by me in July 1976, and exposed with the help of my wife.
30. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XI, Pt. 1, No. 36, Pl. V. Another *vīragal* of excellent carving dated A.D. 997 of the same type was noticed by me. *See, Indian Archaeology—A Review* 1966–67, p. 28, Plate XV A.
31. While the Talagunda inscription of Kadamba Śāntivarma begins with an invocation to Śiva, the Banavasi inscription of Mṛgeśavarma commences with an invocation to Viṣṇu. Further, the colossal sculpture of Harī-Hara of the Harihareśvara temple, still in worship in Harihara located on the Uttaravāhinī Tuṅgabhadrā near Uchaṅgī, a secondary capital of early Kadambas, is iconographically of *c.* fifth century A.D. I have discussed in detail the sculpture in my article, "Harihara Parisaradalli Purātattva Sodhane," *Pradīpike* (*Śrī Venkatarayacharya Abhinandana Grantha*) released in December 1979. There is another sculpture of Harihara of the same period in Gokarna *see* A. Sundara, "Some Archaeological Discoveries in North-West Karnataka," *Silver Jubilee Souvenir of Janata Shikshana Samiti* (1975-76), Dharwad. Thus there appears to be widespread Hari-Hara cult in the early Kadamba kingdom.
32. The Hunsūr copper plate of Mṛgeśvarmā belonging to his seventh regnal year recording the grant of the village Kiruniralli begins with invocation to Brahmā as "Daṇḍakamaluhastaḥ Padme Pravarāsana Brahmā." I have noticed an octagonal tall Caturmukha Brahmā pillar of *c.* fifth-sixth century A.D. in Uppinapattana, Kumtha Tālukā, North Kanara District (*see* A. Sundara, "Gadaga-Belageriyalliruva," p. 16, Plate VI, 3). There are similar small pillars of tenth-eleventh century A.D. in Bandalike and other places nearby in Sorab and Śikārapura Talukas, Shimoga District, and the tallest sculpture of Brahmā in relief dating *c.* eleventh century A.D. in Gokarṇa. *See* A. Sundara, "Two Rare Sculptures from Shimoga and Gokarna," *Journal of Karnatak University* (Social Sciences), Vol. XI, (1975), pp. 91–93. All these suggest the prevalence of the worship of Brahmā in the southern, northwestern and southwestern parts of North Kanara, Shimoga and Dharwad Districts from about fifth to twelfth century A.D.
33. *Karnatak Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 2–4.
34. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XV, No. 573.
35. *Ibid.*, Vol. XX, No. 64.
36. *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII, No. 296.

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36

Observations on the Epigraphic References to Temple Styles

T.P. VERMA

AMONG INSCRIPTIONS from south India that mention styles of medieval temples named in the *śilpa śāstras* is the Koṭīśvara temple inscription from Kuppaṭūr (modern Kubbatūr in Sorab Taluk, Shimoga District, Karnataka State). It states that the "temple of Koṭīśa-Bhava, (was) freely ornamented with Drāviḍa, Bhūmija and Nāgara, and with *bhadra*-offsets manipulated in many ways."[1] Here the terms Drāviḍa, Bhūmija and Nāgara are used along with *bhadra*-offsets as if these were simply architectural decoration devices. To some extent this supports the views of T.P. Bhattacharya when he says that "The terms Nāgara, Drāviḍa and Vesara therefore meant, to south Indian architects, three varieties of buildings of south India built of different shapes, and not three separate styles . . . ."[2]

But the situation in the Hoḷal inscription is quite different. The *sūtradhārī* Bammoja boasts of being a Viśvakarmā of the Kali-age [because he was] skilled in sixty-four arts (*cauṣaṣṭhi-kalāvidde pravīṇa*) and expert [in building] sixty-four [varieties of] *prāsādas* [*cauṣaṣṭhi-prāsāda-viśārada*], and by whom four classes of Nāgara, Kaliṅga, Drāviḍa and Vesara *prāsādas* were built [*Nāgara-Kaliṅga-Drāviḍa-Vesara caturjāti prāsāda-vinirmita*].[3] Here the term *prāsāda* is used in two different ways: first, for sixty-four varieties of buildings, and second, for four classes of buildings. It is not known what the *sūtradhārī* Bammoja really meant by these terms. Although the Hoḷal epigraph does not clearly mention, like the Koṭīśvara inscription, that the temple was decorated with these features, this nevertheless appears to be implied. M.A. Dhaky has rightly tried to recognize these among the architectural decorations featured on the temples of Karnataka.[4] Thus it can be inferred that to a south Indian architect the terms Nāgara, Drāviḍa, Vesara, Bhūmija, etc. were the devices, like sculptures, which could be used for temple decorations.

In this connection it will be interesting to recall the definition of the Prāsāda Kṣitibhūṣaṇa. Stella Kramrisch states that according to the *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra*[5] it is "one of those Prāsādas which can be built as Drāviḍa, Nāgara or Vārāṭa."[6] But in the case of the Koṭīśvara temple, I would like to suggest that a Prāsāda Kṣitibhūṣaṇa is one which is ornamented with Drāviḍa, Bhūmija and Nāgara (or Vārāṭa, etc.) decorations. Actually these south Indian temples should be regarded Kṣitibhūṣaṇa Prāsādas on which such decorations have been found.

In addition to the well-known triad of the Nāgara, Drāviḍa and Vesara, the Hoḷal inscription gives the fourth name Kaliṅga. The Koṭīśvara temple inscription replaces Vesara by the term Bhūmija but maintains the ternary. The term Kaliṅga is significant in the Hoḷal inscription because it recognizes a regional style.

Kramrisch quotes the *Bṛhacchilpaśāstra*, III 68–73 giving two lists of the types or styles of temples

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beginning with (1) Nāgara, (2) Drāviḍa, (3) Miśraka, (4) Latina, (5) Sādhāra, (6) Bhūmi and (7) Nāgarapuṣpaka Vimāna, in the first instance; and (1) Nāgara, (2) Drāviḍa, (3) Vairāṭa, (4) Bhūmi, (5) Latina, (6) Sādhāra and (7) Miśraka, in the second.[7] The *Aparājitapṛcchā* (MS. in S.K. Roy Collection, Fol. 51) mentions Nāgarī, Drāviḍī, Lātī and Vairāti.[8] Further, this text is said to give fourteen types in the first and eight in the second list.[9] A glance shows that these names fall into two distinct classes. Some are for regional styles and others for architectural styles. Thus Miśraka, Latina, Sādhāra, Bhūmi and Nāgarapuṣpaka Vimāna appear to be architectural stylistic names, while Nāgara, Drāviḍī, Lātī, Vairāṭī, and Kāliṅgī are geographical names. I wish to emphasize this distinction.

Kramrisch has stated that the "ternary, Nāgara, Drāviḍa and Vesara is in agreement with the threefold geographical division of India into the North, the Deccan and the South."[10] This may be true for the Drāviḍa and Vesara, but the Nāgara does not fit with the definition of *Aparājitapṛccha* Fol. 25, which "assigns Nāgara to the Madhyadeśa—the 'midland' country; Lāṭi to the Lāṭa country (Gujarat—in the main but also as far east as Gwalior—), Drāviḍi to the South and Vairāṭi to its own country."[11] Madhyadeśa, the country of the Nāgara style, was bounded by the river Sarasvatī in Kurukshetra, Allahabad, the Himalayas and the Vindhyas. Thus the general belief that Nāgara was the "universal" style of whole of north India needs reconsideration. We will have to give due importance to the Gujarati (i.e. Lāṭī), Rajasthani (i.e. Vairāṭī) and Oriya (i.e. Kāliṅgī) styles while also talking about the Nāgara style.

Perhaps this consideration led James Fergusson to prefer the name Indo-Aryan to Nāgara.[12] The term Nāgara tops the list of the triad—Nāgara, Draviḍa and Vasara—and thus it was the most celebrated name. Perhaps also this style of Madhyadeśa generally influenced and inspired the temple building activities in the other parts of northern India. Still, S.K. Saraswati, taking the term Nāgara as a synonym of the entire north Indian style, refers to "two distinct features" of north Indian temples, one in plan and the other in elevation. Thus, according to him, "the fundamental characteristics of a *Nāgara* temple are, ... the cruciform plan and the curvilinear *śikhara*."[13]

But there are variations among the curvilinear *śikharas* of the temples of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat which can be recognized at the first glance. In Orissa, the typical *śikhara* can be distinguished from the very beginning in the Parasurāmeśvara temple. Here the question arises whether the writers of the *śilpa śastras* were unaware of the distinctions among these regional styles and gave them the general name of Nāgara, or is there any relevance in enumerating Nāgara with the Lāṭī, Vairāṭī and Kāliṅgī? Why does the Hoḷal inscription refer to both the Nāgara and Kaḷiṅga forms? These are some of the questions which must be addressed when enumerating all the north Indian temple styles under the universal name Nāgara.

Furthermore, if the geographical or regional distinctions are accepted, can the Nāgara style be assigned or limited to the region of Madhyadeśa only? Madhyadeśa is not a small area; in that region, the temples of Mathura are sharply distinct from those of Varanasi or Bodh Gaya in Bihar. The temples of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar show some clear similarities. In this connection, can some weight be given to the statement of R.D. Banerji,[14] who has taken Nāgara to mean especially "pertaining to Śrī Nagara or Pāṭaliputra, the ancient Metropolis of India"? Stella Kramrisch's objection[15] that it "is not likely for the designation of the temple types as Nāgara, Draviḍa, etc. is later than the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, when Pāṭaliputra had long ceased to hold the leading position" can be reconsidered with the view that tradition in India dies hard. It should be noted here that the *śilpaśāstras* followed traditions, not vice versa. If a certain *śāstra* mentions something, it is registering an existing tradition, not prescribing something new. Thus it is likely that the name Nāgara, associated with the Śri Nagara, the ancient Pāṭaliputra, might have lingered on. Little architecture remains in Varanasi which can be called ancient, but the present temples could not have emerged from nothing. They must have been built as a result of the continuation of the local traditions. Hence, it is not without significance that this region has been left unlisted by the *śilpaśāstras* and is not mentioned in epigraphs referring to regional styles. Can this seeming silence be explained by the inclusion of Varanasi forms under the heading Nāgara?

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NOTES

1. *Cf.* M.A. Dhaky, *The Indian Temple Forms in Karṇāṭa Inscriptions and Architecture*, New Delhi 1977, p. 3.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, Calcutta 1946, p. 290.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 251.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 291–92.
8. S.K. Saraswati, "Art," in R.C. Majumdar, ed., *Struggle for Empire*, Bombay 1966, p. 694, *infra* 1.
9. Krishna Deva, "Bhumija Temples," in Pramod Chandra, ed., *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, Delhi 1975.
10. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, p. 292.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 291, *infra* 106.
12. James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II, London 1910, p. 84 ff.
13. Saraswati, "Art," p. 532.
14. *Cf.* Kramrisch, p. 287, *infra* 95.
15. *Ibid.*

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37

Udega, the Chief Architect of the Saraswatī Temple at Gadag

SHRINIVAS H. RITTI

AN IMPORTANT inscription recently discovered extols a particular architect and makes it possible to surmise the authorship of the famous temple of Sarasvatī at Gadag in central Karnataka and fix the date of its construction.

The Sarasvatī temple at Gadag (Dharwad District: Plate 218) has been proclaimed by Henry Cousens and others following him as a fine specimen of later Calukya temple architecture. An inscription found on the right wall of the temple was brought to public notice in the form of an article in Kannada, published in the Kannada weekly *Sudha* (September 30, 1979) by B.K. Hiremath, Lecturer in Kannada in the College at Gadag.

The inscription is in Kannada language and script (*cf.* Plate 219). Hiremath has given an eye-copy of it in his article. According to him, the inscription eulogizes Śrī Kriyāśakti Paṇḍita as a *rūvāri* (Sanskrit *rūpakāra*) that is sculptor or architect who was responsible for constructing this temple and also the adjoining Trikūṭeśvara temple. He has not attempted to fix the date of either the inscription or the temple.

The eye-copy published by Hiremath is fairly good, but it contains a few obvious errors. Further, when I read the article, I wondered if Śrī Kriyāśakti Paṇḍita mentioned in the inscription could be a *rūvāri* or architect at all. For, it is well known that Kriyāśakti Paṇḍita is a name borne by many Kāḷāmukha ascetics of Karnataka. Indeed, they contributed to the temple building activity in early and medieval Karnataka, but they are not heard of as being *rūvāri* themselves. Thus I thought that an examination of the inscription on the site would help understand its true meaning. I, then, studied and copied the inscription on the 28th of October 1979.

The inscription, in two lines, is engraved on an offset wall-pilaster and so looks as though it is engraved in a panel. It is well-preserved and reads as follows:

1. Śrī Kriyāśakti paṇḍitadēvara Vidyāvanta
   anēka-citra-śāstr=ādi upanyāsa-kama(ma)
   ḷāsana duṣṭu(ṣṭa)-rūvāri-Madana-
2. Mahēśvara mā[r*]kkoḷuva-rūvārī-madebha-
   pañcānana ma[c*]caripa rūvāri-veśyā bhujaṁga
   Udegaṁ bhuvanaika-bhubhuṁ (bhuṁbhu)
   ka[||]

As it can be seen, the inscription is in praise of Udega, who was a *rūvāri* or architect of repute. A string of epithets is employed to extol his greatness. Each of these epithets is examined here.

1. Śrī Kriyāśakti-paṇḍitadēvara Vidyāvanta[1]: i.e. the *Vidyāvanta* of Śrī Kriyāśakti *Paṇḍita*. The word *vidyavanta* ordinarily means "one who possesses knowledge", but here it can be construed as meaning a disciple. This epithet thus speaks of Udega as a disciple of Śrī Kriyāśakti Paṇḍita.

2. Anēka-citra-śāstr=ādi-upanyāsa-Kamaḷā-

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sana[2]: A person who is like the god Brahmā (*Kamaḷāsana*) in expounding several arts and sciences.

3. Duṣṭa[3]-rūvāri-Madana-Mahēśvara: He who would put down the wicked architects just as Maheśvara put down Kāma.

4. Mārk-koluva-rūvāri-madēbha-pañcānana: He who would overpower the opposing *rūvāri*, as a lion would overpower a rutting elephant.

5. Maccaripa[4] rūvāri-veśyā-bhujaṁga: He would break the pride of the jealous *rūvāri* as a *viṭa* or a paramour would do to a harlot.

6. bhuvanaika-bhuṁbhuka: The word *bhuṁbhuka* appears to be an onomotopoic term connoting greatness, triumph, etc. Thus Udega is extolled as a triumphant architect in the world.

The inscription in translation may read:

Triumphant in the world is Udega, the disciple of Śrī Kriyāśakti *Paṇḍita*, (Udega) who is equal to god Brahmā in expounding the various arts and sciences; who, to the wicked architects, is as god Śiva was to Kāma; who would overpower the opponent architects just as a lion would overpower a rutting elephant; who would break the pride of the jealous architects as an expert paramour would do to a harlot.

These epithets do not give any historical information, but at least create an impression that Udega was a noted architect. Since his name is found on the temple wall itself, it stands to reason that he was the chief architect of the Sarasvatī temple.

The record does not bear any date, but the characters can be assigned to the latter half of the eleventh century A.D. The characters are comparable to those in the inscriptions of the earlier part of the rule of Vikramāditya VI (1076-1126 A.D.).

Further, a Kriyāśakti figures in an inscription of 1102 A.D. from Gadag itself[5] as the *ācārya* of the *matha* (monastery) of Svayaṁbhudēva. This Svayaṁbhudēva is obviously Trikūṭeśvara, for elsewhere in the record this deity is called Svayaṁbhu Trikūṭeśvara. There is hardly, then, any doubt that this Kriyāśakti Paṇḍita is the same as his namesake in the inscription discussed here. That he was an *ācārya* of the Trikūṭeśvara temple, by the side of which the Sarasvatī temple stands, indicates that he was instrumental in constructing the Sarasvatī temple through his disciple Udega.

There is no difficulty in fixing the date of the construction. It can be safely placed in the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D. and thus during the rule of Vikramāditya VI. The architectural style is seemingly in full agreement with this deduction.

It is not unlikely that additions such as the large *raṅgamaṇḍapa* to the Trikūṭeśvara temple, the nucleus of which is assignable to the tenth century, were also made during this period.

NOTES

1. Hiremath reads it as *Vidyāvana.*
2. Hiremath: *Upanyāsaka-māḷāsana.*
3. Hiremath: *tastu.*
4. Hiremath: *macaḥ ba.*
5. S.I.I., Vol. XI, Pt. II, No. 150.

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38

A Study of the Label Inscriptions of the Hoysaḷa Sculptors

A.V. NARASIMHA MURTHY

LITERARY RECORDS in India, unlike those of the West, neither comment on nor in most cases take note of the artists even when they refer to monumental and sculptural works. Hoysaḷa art is somewhat an exception to this general observation because the artists of the period have left a large number of label inscriptions on the pedestals of the images they sculptured, the freizes they embellished, the door-jambs they executed and the *śikharas* they built. These label inscriptions, short as they are, give information on the creators of the dazzlingly ornate temples of the period. Thanks in this matter are due to R. Narasimhachar, who opened a new line of enquiry by copying some of these inscriptions.[1] M. Seshadri also evinced interest in this aspect of Hoysaḷa art.[2] But no serious effort has been made by art historians to collect all these inscriptions and from them list these artists and their dates as well as personal details.

Though some legends are known about these artists, largely untrustworthy, no literary work, either contemporary or of subsequent periods, refers to any of them. Epigraphic sources are thus especially important. Generally these inscriptions are found on the pedestals of the images which they adorn. These images may be on the outer walls or niches or in the interior of the temples, bracket figures, on the *śikharas* or the door-jambs. Inscriptions identifying artists are also found on decorative friezes or those which narrate Purāṇic stories. Rarely the names of the architects are encountered in the foundation epigraphs of the temple, as in the case of the Doḍḍagaddavaḷḷi temple (1112 A.D.), which mentions the architect Mallōja Māṇiyōja. Some of the inscriptions are sufficiently long to include the name of the artist, his native place, parents and also his titles. Some are confined only to the name, while still others mention only the first letter or an abbreviation of the name, as in the case of Mallitamma, who was content to mention his name either in full or in part even when space was available on the pedestals. All these inscriptions, in Kannada language and script, are artistically executed and in many cases add to the elegance of the image.

Some of these label inscriptions giving artists' names help date the temples in the absence of foundational records. The Lakṣmīnarasiṁha temple at Jāvagaḷ in Hassan District and the Pañcaliṅga temple at Govindanahaḷḷi, Mandya District, are undated. But both of them contain a large number of label inscriptions mentioning the great artist Mallitamma. The same artist's label inscriptions are found in the Amṛtēśvara temple at Amṛtāpura and in the Kēśava temple at Sōmanāthapura. The former is dated to 1196 A.D., and the latter to 1268 A.D. so it can be surmised that the temples at Jāvagaḷ and Govindanahaḷḷi were built between these dates.

In these inscriptions the sculptors are generally referred to as *rūvāris* i.e. *rūpakāri*, meaning a sculp-

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tor. The majority of the sculptors' names end in *oja*, such as Dāsoja, Nāgoja and Honoja. *Oja* can be derived from Sanskrit *upādhāya*, meaning a teacher or one well versed in any *śāstra*. Most of these sculptors were perhaps teachers. Very rarely the word *ācāri* also occurs in Hoysaḷa inscriptions, denoting a sculptor, though in later periods it became a caste denomination of the members of the community heriditarily engaged in arts and crafts professions.

The earliest inscription (foundational and not pedestal) to mention a Hoysaḷa artist is at the Lakṣmīdēvi temple at Doḍḍagaddavaḷḷi (1112 A.D.).[3] The artist is Malloja Māṇiyoja, who is compared to the divine architect Viśvakarma:

> Śrīman Mahālakṣmī dēviya
> prāsādavaṁ geyda Viśvakarma nirmita
> Subhāsitan appa Mallōja Māṇiyōjaṁge.

On the Keśava temple at Belur (1117 A.D.), the large number of label inscriptions mention a host of sculptors. Among these, Dāsoja was outstanding, for his sculptures are beautiful and his name occurs frequently. The pedestal of the fifth *Śālabhañjikā* has the inscription *Baḷḷigrāmeya rūvāri Dāsoja biruda rūvāri gondalabaḍiva*.[4] The seventh *Śālabhañjikā* on its pedestal has the epigraph *Baḷḷigrāmeya rūvāri Dāsojana besa*.[5] The sixteenth *Śālabhañjikā* has the inscription *Baḷḷigrāmeya rūvāri Dāsojanu māḍida sālabandike*.[6] At Kaṇakaṭṭe in Hassan District, an inscription dated 1152 A.D. has a reference to Dāsoja of Baḷḷigrāme (*Baḷḷigrāmeya Dāsojana* .....).[7] Perhaps he was the engraver of this inscription. An inscription from Taḷaḷūr, also in the Hassan District, refers to Dāsoja (*Dāsojana agratanayam Masaṇaṁ*);[8] this epigraph is dated 1185 A.D. He is mentioned as the engraver of an inscription from Baḷḷigrāme in Shimoga District, dated 1068 A.D.[9] Dāsoja figures in a Hoysaḷa inscription from Śravaṇa-Belgoḷa. It is from the Gandhavāraṇa *basadi* dated 1145 A.D. and describes Dāsoja as the son of Rāmoja, who engraved this inscription.[10] (*Rūvāri Rāmojana maga Dāsoja kaṁḍarisida*.)

Dāsoja is also mentioned in an inscription from Kallūr in Soraba taluk of Shimoga; the inscription is dated 1138 A.D.[11] In the inscription, in which he is said to have carved the *vīragaḷ*, he is described as belonging to Taḷave. (*Taḷaveya Dāsōja besageyda*, i.e. Dāsoja of Taḷave made this.)

On a Keśava image of the Hoysaḷa period, originally from a temple in Kikkeri, 40 miles from Mysore, but now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, is an inscription which mentions Dāsoja as follows:[12]

> Sarasvatigaṇadāsi Baḷḷigrāmeya rūvāri
> dāsojana besa | | Kesavamūrti | |
> Dāsoja of Baḷḷigrāme belonging to the Sarasvati-*gaṇa* guild made this figure of Keśavamūrti.

Finally, another inscription referring to Dāsoja has been discovered recently in the village Baḷḷigrāme itself, the artist's native place. This unpublished epigraph is in one line on an image whose upper portion is missing.[13] On the lower part is an elegantly carved Garuḍa in low relief, with folded hands, turning to right. It is similar to the relief sculpture of Garuḍa found on the pedestal of the chief deity Vijayanārāyaṇa at Belur along with an inscription of Viṣṇuvardhana. The inscription on the pedestal reads: *Acyutamūrti Dāsojana besa* (Acyuta image, Dāsoja's work).

The dates in inscriptions mentioning Dāsoja indicate that there were two or more persons with that name. One of them takes pride in calling himself as Dāsoja of Baḷḷigrāme as attested by several inscriptions. Notably, however, both the epigraphs found at Baḷḷigrāme do not mention his native place. Thus either this Dāsoja may be different from Baḷḷigrāmeya Dāsoja or, more plausibly, there was no need to identify his native village in the place itself. Possibly, when he went to work elsewhere, he distinguished himself from the other Dāsoja by mentioning his native place. If he is identical with Dāsoja of the Śravaṇa-Belgoḷa inscription, he was the son of Rāmoja. He belonged to the guild Sarasvati *gaṇa*. He had the title "Smiter of the crowd of titled sculptors." He sculpted several images at Belur and also the image of Keśava at Kikkeri and of Acyutamūrti at Baḷḷigāme. After finishing his work at Bellur, he apparently went to Haḷebīd and worked on the Hoysaḷeśvara temple as attested by a single female sculpture which bears his name.

Dāsoja's celebrated son was Cāvaṇa, known from several inscriptions. Several are found on the pedestals of images at the Cannakeśava temple, Belur. One of them states *Svasti Śrīmatu Baḷḷigrāmeya rūvāri Dāsojana putra Cāvaṇa māḍida puttalī maccaripa biruda rūvāri Madana Maheśa Keśava deva māḍisida besa*.[14] On another sculpture is engraved: *Baḷḷigrāmeya Dāsojana putra Cavaṇa geyida .... biruda rūvāri Madana Maheśa*.[15] One more sculpture bears an inscription *Ruvāri Dāsojana putra Cāvaṇana besa*.[16] A fourth inscription reads *Svasti Śrīmatu Baḷḷigrā-*

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Plate 220. Nārttāmalai. Vijayālayacoḷīśvara temple, *dvārapāla Mahākāla.* (Courtesy: French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry.)

Plate 221. Nārttāmalai. Vijayālayacoḷīśvara temple, *dvārapāla Mahākāla.* (Courtesy: French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry.)

Plate 222. Nārttāmalai. Vijayālayacoḷīśvara temple, *dvārapāla Nandi.* (Courtesy: French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry.)

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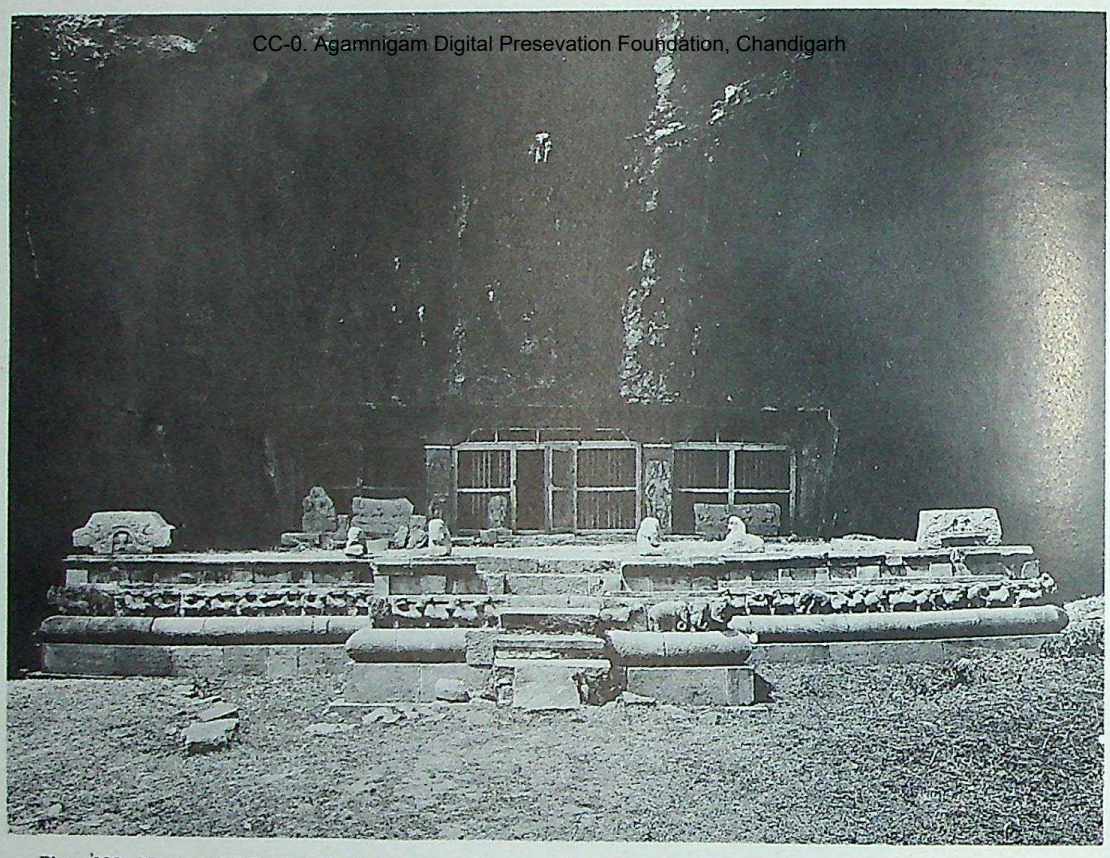

Plate 223. Nāṛttāmalai. Rock-cut Paḷiyiḷīśvara temple, front view. Cōḷanādu style, Muttaraiyar. *c.* second quarter of 9th century A.D. (Courtesy: American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi.)

Plate 224. Nāṛttamalai. Paḷiyiḷīśvara temple, *dvārapāla.* (Courtesy: French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry.)

Plate 225. Nārttamalai. Paḷiyiḷīśvara temple, *dvārapāla.* (Courtesy: French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry.)

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meya Dhammēsvaradēvara pāda paṁkajabhramara Dāsojana putra Cāvaṇa-nageyda nritya Sarasvati gaṇadāsi maccaripa ruvāri sarabha bheruṇḍa,[17] which may be translated: This figure was carved by Dāsoja's son Cāvaṇa, a devotee of Dharmeśvara of Baḷḷigrāme, belonging to the Sarasvati *gaṇa* and a double headed eagle (*bheruṇḍa*) to the *Śarabha* i.e. titled sculptors. Thus it is learnt that Cāvaṇa was the son of the sculptor Dāsoja of Baḷḷigrāme and a devotee of god Dharmeśvara of Baḷḷigrāme. He, like his father, belonged to the guild Sarasvatī *gaṇa*. He had the titles, "Śiva to the cupid who are the titled sculptors" and a "*bheruṇḍa* to the *sarabhas*, the titled sculptors."

The sculptor Nāgoja is mentioned on the pedestal of a *Sālabhañjikā* on the outer wall of the same Keśava temple.[18] It may be translated, "The work of Nāgoja, a sculptor of the god Svayambhu Trikuṭeśvara of Gadag, the delighter of the hearts of the good, a bee at the feet of Sarasvatī and the son of Kātoja, and the possessor of the title 'Confounder of the crowd of sculptors.'"

On the pedestal of the sculpture referred to as Vasantasundarī, holding betal leaf in her hand, is an epigraph which mentions the sculptor Cikkahaṁpa, son of Biṁnāṇi Ineja; he had the title, "Champion among the rival sculptors."[19] A second inscription simply records the carving of another female figure: *Śrī rūvāri Cikkahaṁpa māḍida puttali*.[20]

Cikkahaṁpa's father, Biṁnāṇi Ineja, also a sculptor who worked at the Keśava temple, is mentioned beneath a bearded dancing figure playing on a drum. He is described as having made a *Śālabhañjikā* in the *maṇḍapa* of the Vijayanārāyaṇa temple built by Hoysaḷa Biṭṭideva.[21] The inscription reads: *Śrīmatu Poysaḷa Biṭṭidevana Vijayanārāyaṇadevara maṁṭapada Sāḷubandile māḍida Biṁnaṇi*.

An inscription on the pedestal of a dancing female figure at the temple gives the artist's name Malliyaṇṇa and describes him as "a thunderbolt to the hill of titled sculptors."[22] Keṁca Malliyaṇṇa is apparently a different artist, represented by an inscription which simply mentions his name, *Ruvāri Keṁcamalliyaṇṇana hastakuśalatika*.[23]

Padari Malloja, the son-in-law of Vadoja of the town Nālvattumbāḍa (a division of forty villages), is also known from a label inscription at the Keśava temple, this one on the twenty-first *Śālabhañjikā*.[24] He is called "a pair of large scissors to the necks of titled sculptors." Similarly, Mayiṇa, who made an image at the Keśava temple, is known from a pedestal inscription.[25] The sculptor Masada, described at the Keśava temple as the son of Yallaṇa,[26] carved the sculpture of a dancing lady. Rūvāri Vibhaṇṇa sculptured the image of a woman plucking a mango fruit from the tree. Malloja carved a sculpture of a dancing woman. Finally, Kumāramācāri was responsible for producing the sculpture numbered 12 and is called a tiger among the sculptors and a thunderbolt to the mountains the rival sculptors.[27]

The temples at Haḷebīd do not yield so many artists' names, but two inscriptions, on the southern and eastern lintels of the Hoysaḷeśvara temple, belonging to the time of Narasiṁha I and not that of Viṣṇuvardhana incidentally refer to the sculptors who made them. The southern *toraṇa* doorway, which was added at the instance of Narasiṁha I, bears an inscription mentioning two artists.[28]

The first is *rūvari* Kedāroja, described as the sculptors of the King Narasiṁha. Under him worked Kāḷidāsi, the great sculptors who executed this lintel with *makara toraṇa*. Kāḷidāsi, here called "a thunderbolt to the hill the rival sculptors," is also mentioned in another inscription dated 1161 A.D.[29] There he is styled *rūvāri Kāḷidāsi catuppadi cakravartti birudu*. Both the date and the exhalted title suggest that this Kāḷidāsi and the one mentioned in the Hoysaḷeśvara temple inscription are the same. The eastern doorway of the Hoysaḷeśvara temple, also added at the time of Narasiṁha I (1141 A.D.), was executed by sculptor Dēmoja.[30]

In the same temple a beautiful Kirātārjunīya panel, 2.44 m. long with various incidents of the story, was carved by Ketaṇa.[31] Another panel of the same story is carved by Balaṇa.[32] Māba is a sculptor of figures representing the Bhairavi group. At the end of the same panel are written Maba, Mābaṇana Māba, Kaṁbajana Masaṇa māḍida,[33] perhaps different sculptors, namely Maba, Mābaṇana Māba and Kaṁbajana Masaṇa. In another place is seen the letter *Ma* under a relief representing a *Mahābhārata* story, perhaps referring to Māba or Masaṇa.[34]

At Belur is a panel containing Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu and bearing the inscription *Bēlūra Lakapa*, Lakapa of Belur. The sculptor Rēvoja is known from an inscription on a panel representing a *Mahābhārata* story on the western main wall.[35] He may also have carved a sculpture of Ṣaṇmukha on the southern side of the wall, for under it is found letter "Re."[36] On the western wall panel representing a *Mahābhārata* story,

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near Arjuna's fight, is an inscription which reads *Baḍeyagiriya Haripanū Belūra āgadelū idaṁ*,[37] referring to Haripa, who perhaps belonged to Baḍevagiri. Haripa is mentioned in another inscription, this one on the pedestal of a sculpture representing Nāṭya Sarasvatī from Haḷēbīḍ, now in the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the Mysore University. The inscription reads *Haripa Sarasvati Saraṇōvidam*. As this sculpture originally belonged to the temple at Haḷēbīḍ, it is quite likely that this Haripa is identical to the one mentioned above.[38]

On the western main wall in a panel representing the fight between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, is an inscription of Haridāsi of Tānaguṁḍūr,[39] perhaps the Sthānakundūr or Tālagunda famous in south Indian art history for the Praṇaveśvara temple. Finally, there are two similar inscriptions at Belur which refer to Biraṇa and Sarasvatidāsa.[40]

The Amṛteśvara temple at Amṛtāpura was built by Amṛteśvara Daṇḍanāyaka in the year 1196 A.D. as attested by an inscription.[41] Its *raṅgamaṇḍapa* has thirty ceiling panels, each with a large number of sculptures. The name Mallitamma is engraved on many of these. As this is the earliest known inscription of this sculptor, he may have started his career as a sculptor at Amṛtāpura. He is next met with on the temple at Hārnahaḷḷi dedicated to Lakṣminarasiṁha built in 1234 A.D. A large number of images there such as Gōvardhanagiridhāri, Janārdana, Narasiṁha and Aniruddha bear the name Mallitamma.[42]

He was also an important sculptor at a fine temple of Lakṣminarasiṁha built in 1246 A.D. at Nuggihoḷḷi in Hassan District. There he is referred to as *rūvari* Mallitamma in three inscriptions,[43] while others simply refer to him as Mallitamma. His name is found on sculptures of Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Lakṣmī, Durgā, Narasiṁha, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Devēndra, Garutma, Vāsudeva, Accyuta, Janārdana, Upendra, Hari, Indra, Veṇugopāla, Mahiśāsuramardinī and two-armed Viṣṇu. Also at this temple, on a Vāsudeva sculpture, is an inscription which reads *Śrī Ādimūrtidevaranu Nandiya Baicoja māḍida kaṇḍire*, i.e. Baicoja of Nandi (name of the place) made the image of Śrī Ādimūrti.[44] On the sculpture of Govardhanadhāri is an inscription which reads *Āribirida rūvāri girivajradaṁḍa birida prasādimastikāśūla rūvāri Naṁdiya Baicoja māḍida ruvāra*.[45] The name of Baicoja also occurs on other sculptures such as Trivikrama, Narasiṁha killing Hiraṇyakaśipu and Harihara.

The Kedāreśvara temple in Nāgalāpura in Tumkūr District, an undated temple of the Hoysaḷa period, does not have many sculptures on the outer wall but has large number of miniature turrets, many inscribed with the name of the artist Baicoja. At one place there is an inscription *Ruvāri Sigojana maga Baicoja*, meaning Baicoja, son of sculptor Sigoja. At six other places the name Baicoja alone is inscribed. He may be identical with Baicoja mentioned in the Nuggihalli temple. If that is so, this temple could not have been far removed in date from Nuggihalli temple.

At the undated Lakṣmīnarasiṁha temple at Jāvagaḷ,[46] the name Mallitamma is engraved on a large number of sculptures. This Mallitamma is different from Cikkamallitamma who also has carved large number of images and panels here, as testified to by his inscription Cikkamallitamma.

The Brahmeśvara temple at Kikkeri, about forty miles from Mysore, bears on the southern basement of the Nandimaṇḍapa an inscription of Nakarācāri in the twelfth-century characters.[47] On the eastern cornice is the inscription of Masaṇa, also in twelfth-century characters,[48] apparently the same Masaṇa who worked in the Hoysaḷeśvara temple at Haḷebīḍ. On the eastern cornice of the shrine of the goddess is seen an inscription *Rekhāviḷāsa Harimalla ruvariga vajradaṇḍa*.[49] Though not complete, it mentions Harimalla and his title a "thunderbolt to the enemies" and also his second title, *rekhāviḷāsa*. As already seen, the sculptor Dāsoja worked for a temple in Kikkeri. A Hoysaḷa inscription of 1117 A.D. found in the Īśvara temple at Tenginaghaṭṭa mentions Hāloja from Kikkeri and his son Bammōja.[50] Thus it appears that Kikkeri was a center of sculptors.

Although the temple dedicated to Īśvara, called the Pañcaliṅgeśvara temple, at Govindanahaḷḷi in Mandya District is undated, it can be assigned to the early part of the thirteenth century on the basis of an artist's name. In the *maṇḍapa* are two *dvārapālas* whose pedestals each bear the inscription[51] *Rūvāri Mallitamma*. Thus this temple is connected with sculptor Mallitamma, active as we have seen in the early part of the thirteenth century.

The Īśvara temple at Turuvekere in Tumkur District was built by Soma Daṇḍanāyaka in 1263 A.D. as reported by an inscription at the temple.[52] This Soma is also referred to as the minister of war and peace in the inscription; hence he can be easily identified as Somanātha Daṇḍanāyaka, the founder of the famous

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Keśava temple at Somanāthapur in 1268 A.D. Since there are no sculptures on the temple's outside wall, the sculptors inscribed their names on the basement. Three names are mentioned, one of them occurring twice.[53] They are Īśvara, Saroja and Jakaṁṇa, the latter occurring twice. If this Jakaṁṇa is identical with Jakkaṇa or Jakkanācāri of tradition, then this is the only epigraphic reference to that artist.

Another inscription from the same place, dated in 1291 A.D. and belonging to the Hoysaḷas, mentions Bināṇi, Navileya Masaṇoja and Māboja as worshippers at the feet of Kedāradeva and also as having made some stone images.[54] These names are familiar, being found in other Hoysaḷa temples referred to above, but it is not known whether they carved any sculpture on temples in and around Turuvekere.

The Cannakeśava temple at Araḷaguppe, also in Tumkur District, has been assigned to the first half of the thirteenth century A.D. on stylistic grounds, as it has no foundation inscription.[55] There ten label inscriptions here mention the sculptor Honoja. Important among the sculptures which mention Honoja are Harihara, Yōganārāyaṇa, Durgā and Pradyumna. On some of them, he is simply identified by the first letter of his name *Ho*.

In a Jaina temple at Kallahaḷḷi in Mysore District is an image of a Jina on whose pedestal is an inscription that among other details mentions the sculptor Nāgoja son of Bupoja (*Śrī Śrī rūvāri Bupōjana maga rūvāri Nāgoja māḍida.*)[56] The characters of the inscription can be attibuted to the twelfth century; the image is of soapstone and shows Hoysaḷa workmanship.

The famous Keśava temple at Sōmanāthapura has a large number of label inscriptions mentioning Hoysaḷa artists.[57] That Mallitamma, possibly the one known from the Amṛtēśvara temple, contributed his best to this temple can be surmised by over eighty incriptions mentioning his name. He carved wall sculptures, friezes and images in the *śikhara* of the temple. As was the practice with Mallitamma, either his full name, part of the name, or just the initial letter appears here also. Some of the important sculptures which contain the label inscription of Mallitamma are Daśaratha in his court, Dhṛtarāṣṭra in his court, the Pāṇḍavas going to the potter's house, a row of elephants, *makaras,* swans and horses. Of the large wall sculptures which bear the name Mallitamma, a dancing Lakṣmī, a Śrīdhara, a six armed Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu as Kalki, and a dancing goddess, are noteworthy.

Other sculptors at the Keśava temple known from inscriptions include Naṁjaya, artist of a dancing Sarasvatī, and Balaya, known from three inscriptions. They are executed on the pedestals of large wall images of Keśava with his consort, Lakṣmī and Halāyudha. Cāmaya is represented by two inscriptions found on the images of Veṇugopāla and Paraśurāma. Cauḍaya carved two figures of Sūrya and Viṣṇu. Masaṇitamma's inscriptions are found on the images of Rati, Manmatha and Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. Bomma carved an image of Rāma. Viṭṭha is represented by an inscription on standing Viṣṇu. Another standing Viṣṇu image has the inscription Lohita. Yaḷamasaya is mentioned in an inscription on the image of dancing Sarasvatī. A standing Viṣṇu is signed Māraṇa.

Thus there are names of many master sculptors who created and embellished the Hoysaḷa temples. They made both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava images, demonstrating that they kept art above their personal religious leanings. Now art historians can take stylistic clues from the inscribed images and on that basis determine the authorship of sculptures on other temples of the Hoysaḷa period.

NOTES

1. *Vide Annual Reports of the Mysore Archaeological Department* (relevant years) and his comments. The practice was continued by his successor M.H. Krishna.

2. M. Seshadri, "Sculptors and Architects of Ancient and Medieval Karnataka." *Half Yearly Journal of the Mysore University,* Vol. XXIX-XXX (1970-71), pp. 1-10.

3. Narasimhachar, *The Lakshmidevi Temple at Doddagaddavalli,* Bangalore 1919, p. 7.

4. *Epigraphia Carnatica,* Vol. V, B1 34.

5. *Ibid.*, B1 36.

6. *Ibid.*, B1 37.

7. *Ibid.*, Ak 52.

8. *Ibid.*, Ak 127.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Sk 136.

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10. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Sb 289.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. II (Revised edition, Mysore 1973), No. 173.
12. Seshadri, "Sculptors and Architects."
13. This was discovered by Sri H.R. Raghunatha Bhat of the Mysore University.
14. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. V, B1 35.
15. *Ibid.*, B1 39
16. *Ibid.*, B1 45.
17. *Ibid.*, Vol. XV B1 257. A person by name Cāvaṇa is mentioned in an epigraph, Ak 92. He is not a sculptor but a donee receiving some grants.
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, B1 51.
19. *Ibid.*, B1 50.
20. *Ibid.*, B1 33.
21. *Ibid.*, B1 50.
22. *Ibid.*, B1 38.
23. *Ibid.*, B1 47.
24. *Ibid.*, B1 43.
25. *Ibid.*, B1 46.
26. *Ibid.*, B1 48.
27. *Ibid.*, B1 40.
28. *Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department* for the Year 1930, p. 47.
29. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. XII, Ck 32.
30. *Annual Report*, 1930, p. 48.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
40. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. XV, B1 314 and 315.
41. *Annual Report*, 1931, p. 7.
42. *Ibid.*, 1933, p. 52.
43. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Cn. 282, 283 and 284.
44. *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, Cn 278.
45. *Ibid.*, Cn 280.
46. *Annual Report*, 1933, p. 71.
47. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. VI (revised edition), Kr 30.
48. *Ibid.*, Kr 33.
49. *Ibid.*, Kr 34.
50. *Ibid.*, Kr 42.
51. *Ibid.*, Kr 40.
52. *Ibid.*, Vol. XVI, Tp 2.
53. *Ibid.*, Tp 151.
54. *Ibid.*, Tp 39.
55. *Annual Report*, 1935, p. 3.
56. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. IV (revised edition), Hn 38.
57. *Ibid.*, Vol. V (revised edition), Tn 93.

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39

A Review of Epigraphical Sources for the Art History of Tamil Nadu (850–950 A.D.)

K.G. KRISHNAN

IN ART, as in other fields, the period under review, synchronizing with the rise of the Coḷas, witnessed intense activity in the construction of numerous stone temples many of which have survived in well-preserved form. The Muttaraiyars and the Irukkuvēḷs were the important feudatory families of the Coḷas, actively engaged in temple building in the border lands between the Pallava and the Pāṇḍya dominions. The most important temples built by them were far removed from the Kāverī basin. The Vijayāḷayacoḷīśvara (Plate 220) at Nāṛttāmalai (Pudukkoṭṭai District) is one such temple. The inscription in Tamil engraved on the *tripaṭṭa kumuda* below the *dvārapāla* to the proper right of the entrance into the temple reads:

1. Svasti Śrī Cāttam-Pūdiy=āna Iḷaṅgō-
2. [a] di-araiyar eḍuppitta kaṟ -ṟaḷi maḷai-i-
3. ḍitt=aḷiya Mallan Vīḍumaṉ ayiṉa To-
4. ṉṉavaṉ Tamiḻ-adi-araiyaṉ pudukku

The name Cāttam-Pūdi was wrongly read as Sembūdi by S.R. Balasubrahmanyam, who thus missed noting the identity of this chief and concluded that the temple was originally a construction of the times of Vijayāḷaya.[1] Present reconstruction of the genealogy of the Muttaraiyars shows that Cāttam-Pūdi was the son of Kuvāvaṉ Cāttaṉ, also known as Viḍelviḍugu-Muttaraiyaṉ.[2] The genealogy also makes clear that Cāttam-Pūdi was a senior contemporary of Vijayāḷaya. The inscription says that the temple constructed by him was damaged on account of rains and that Mallaṉ Vīḍumaṉ—the brother of Mallaṉ Anantaṉ, a feudatory of Āditya I—renovated it.

Since it is not recorded whether the renovator introduced any new element in this temple, that must be determined on the basis of its features. In the first place, consider the sculptures of the *dvārapālas*. These two are two-armed, about 1 m 52 cm in height, facing front, but the body and one leg are flexed towards the entrance (Plates 221-222). One of their two arms rests on the club, and the other is held in *vismaya* pose. The other features, such as the crown, aura, horns, *hāra*, sacred thread, bracelets, lions, half-trousers, are all very pronounced. They are slender and elegant in form (Plates 221-222). A comparison of these with the two *dvārapālas* of the rock-cut Paḷiyiliśvara temple nearby (Plates 223-225) will reveal the difference in the nature of the workmanship, though an attempt to be as close to the latter, which is earlier, is also evident[3] (Plates 222-223). It is, therefore, possible that these were substituted for the originals. Also possibly added by the renovator are the four pillars in the circumambulatory passage around the inner shrine. These pillars intercept the passage, which is less than two feet at the widest part of it. The erection of the pillars might have been necessitated by the delicate balance maintained by the superstructure and the parapet walls resting on the beam

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stones which extend from the outer ends radially to the base of the superstructure. The pillars would naturally offset damage likely to have been caused to the parapet or even to the superstructure.

In the region, the next important temple from the epigraphic point of view is the Mūvarkovil at Koḍumbāḷūr associated with the Kālāmukhas (*asitavaktra*). On the Mūvarkovil a Sanskrit inscription says that Bhūti[4] (Tamil Pūdi), who had also earned the name Vikramakesari on account of his prowess in battle (*samare labdh=ānya nāmā*), raised three *vimānas* in his own name and in the name of his two wives, referred to as Karṟaḷi and Varaguṇā (*svanāmnā priyayor=nāmnā vimāna-trayam=utthāpya*). The *vimāna* therefore would have been named Bhūtīśvara (Pūdīśvara) and the other two Karṟaḷīśvara and Varaguṇīśvara respectively. The inscriptions engraved on the pillars of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Muchukundeśvara temple nearby refer to this very temple, Tiruppūdīśvaram of Koḍumbāḷūr, thus conclusively confirming the conclusions. In this Mūvarkovil inscription, Vīra Pāṇḍya is mentioned as an adversary, pointing to a date near the time of the Śrīpuṟambiyam battle (*c.* 878) fought between Varaguṇa, the brother of Vīṟa-Pāṇḍya, and Pallava Aparājitavarmā. All the temples along this longitude spreading into the Pudukkoṭṭai area have to be assigned to this period. A studied exclusion of the Kāverī basin, where a storm was brewing, left the minor dynasties such as the Irukkuvēḷs and the Muttaraiyars free to follow their own predilections in building activity in the peripheral areas such as in Panaṅguḍi, Kaliyapaṭṭi, Enādi and Viralūr. It should be noted that regardless of their stylistic affiliations, these temples were bold attempts on the part of their authors with little consideration of ideas derived from the heart of the Coḷa country.[5]

The ancient *Tevāram* hymns are devoted to all the temples other than the ones so far named. Around this period, the first three of the four Śaiva saints —Appar, Sambandhar and Sundarar—had passed away. The movement to convert all the sanctified brick temples could have begun only then. Coḷa Āditya launched this movement, though he did so in a modest way. This coincides very aptly with the corresponding improvement in the political situation. Pāṇḍya Varaguṇavarmā II, who was very active in the heart of the Coḷa country (*c.* 864-878 A.D.), is known as a great Śaiva devotee affiliated with the preachings of the Saint Māṇikkavācaka, who stands apart from the other three saints.

The Tilaisthānam temple and its inscriptions now help to proceed with this inquiry. An epigraph said to be engraved on the pillar at the entrance records the gifts made by both Varaguṇavarmā II and his brother Parāntaka early in the monarch's fourth regnal year (866/67 A.D.), indicating thereby that the main temple was in brick.[6] Another inscription engraved on the south wall of the central shrine is dated in the eighth regnal year (878/79) of Āditya I.[7] The latter date coincides with that of the Tirupuṟambiyam battle. Āditya, who is not known to have taken part directly in any of these which preceded or succeeded this momentous battle, appears on the stage suddenly in this inscription. The Pāṇḍyan withdrawal commences and the Coḷas emerge. It will not be wrong therefore, to date the construction of the Tilaisthānam temple in stone between 866 and 878 A.D.

The religious environment made the authors of the stone constructions all along the Kāverī abstain from recording their building ventures. This statement is noted in the Anbil plates of Sundara Coḷa (*c.* 960 A.D.) attributing all these stone temples to Āditya I.[8] This is certainly likely, since no other agent claims to have built these shrines in stone, while many had tried to patronize temples with gifts, even though they were in brick. But before Āditya could complete this ambitious undertaking of rebuilding the sacred temples in stone, his attention was drawn to the north, where he could expand the frontiers of his kingdom. This feat of conquering Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam is referred to in his undated inscription on the wall of the central shrine at Tillaisthānam. One also finds temples where only the foundations could be laid in stone with the structures above the *adhiṣṭhāna* in brick. The inscriptions assignable to Āditya are engraved on the bases, while those of his successors are found on the walls, thus suggesting that the foundation up to the *vari* or *jagatī*, as the case may be, was in stone and the structure upward in brick in the time of Āditya.[9] The temples at Tiruccatturai and Tiruppaḷanam belong to this group. The inclination is to date the construction of the upper parts in stone, to a period after Āditya I. With these facts in mind, every temple located on the banks of the Kāverī from North Koṅgu to the delta deserves a reexamination.

One inscription engraved on the wall of the central shrine at Tiruccatturai merits attention at this

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stage.[10] Not dated in the reign of any king, it records the creation of an endowment of gold for a lamp called *uttamadāni* by Tennavan Iḷaṅgō-Muttaraiyar *alias* Kaṇḍaṇ O . . . perumāṉ. This epigraph, assignable to a period after Āditya, indicates that this chief rose after the time of this inscription to proclaim himself an independent ruler under the title Kō-Iḷaṅgo-Muttaraiyar. The name of the lamp, *uttamadāni,* the name of the temple at Kīraṉūr, Uttamadāniśvara, and Uttamadāni-caturvēdimaṅgalam mentioned in the inscription dated in the 25th regnal year (931-32 A.D.) of Coḷa Parāntaka I, all point to the emergence of this chief *after* Āditya I and his disappearance before Parāntaka became powerful. The temple at Kīḻttaniyam also should be assigned to this period. The *vṛtta-kumuda* and the *haṁsamālā* are features to be noted in the Kīraṉūr temple.[11] The other features are common to the earlier and later constructions of the Muttaraiyars.

The temples built during the time of Āditya I which had only a stone base and a brick structure above or whole shrines not yet constructed, were completed in stone during the reign of Parāntaka I. A clear instance is provided in the case of the Gomuktīśvara temple at Tiruvāḍuturai. The base section of the central shrine has no inscription at all. The earliest reference to its construction is made in an inscription on the wall of the central shrine dated in the twenty-fifth year (931/32 A.D.) in the reign of Parāntaka I. Another inscription dated in the thirty-eight year (944/45 A.D.) of the same king registers a gift of gold for constructing the temple in stone from the *kuḍappaḍai* upwards. It is clear that the construction had begun before 931 A.D. and the gift recorded in 944 A.D. was made to continue the work. The Tamil expression *kuḍappaḍai* could in this context mean only the convex-shaped base molding called *vṛtta-kumuda* in Sanskrit.[12] One must conclude from this that Karṟaḷip-Piccan needed funds at the stage, when he planned to raise the structure upwards from the *kuḍam*, i.e. *kumudam* stone, which was evidently in brick.

Further information of the sort presented in this paper is likely to emerge from a comprehensive survey and study of temple inscriptions.

NOTES

1. S.R. Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, Bombay 1966, pp. 50–51, illustration 11b.

2. K.G. Krishnan, "The Muttaraiyar," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. V (1972), pp. 82–83. 11 a and 11 c.

4. For the date of Bhūti, *see* K.G. Krishnan, "Kīḻūr Inscription of Nandivarman, Year 16," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXII (1962), pp. 99–102.

5. Contra: S.R. Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Cola Temples*, New Delhi 1971, pp. 108–30. He has failed to reckon with this important basic information.

6. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. V (1926), No. 608; also Balasubrahmanyam, *Early Chola Art*, Vol. I, p. 236.

7. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. V, No. 505.

8. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, "Anbil Plates of Sundara Chola: the 4th Year," *E.I.*, Vol. XV (1919–20), pp. 44–72.

9. Krishna Sastri, ed., *S.I.I.*, Vol. V, Nos. 615 and 616.

10. *Ibid.*, No. 618.

11. Krishnan, "The Muttaraiyar," p. 101; K.V. Soundara Rajan, "Early Pandya, Muttaraiyar and Irukkuvēḷ Architecture," *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture,* Varanasi 1975, pp. 282–83.

12. Krishnan, "Architectural Terms in South Indian Temple Inscriptions," *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, pp. 308–09; Douglas Barrett, *Early Cola Bronzes,* Bombay 1965, p. 7. M.A. Dhaky, however, feels that *kuḍa* is a Tamilization of the Sanskrit *khura* (which is a synonym of *jagatī* or plinth) and *paḍai* is a Tamil rendering of *paṭṭa*. The original term, according to him, is *khura-paṭṭa* rendered as *kuḍapaḍai* in Tamil i.e. *jagatī*. The temple, in that case, is implied to have been rebuilt in stone right from the *jagatī* course up.

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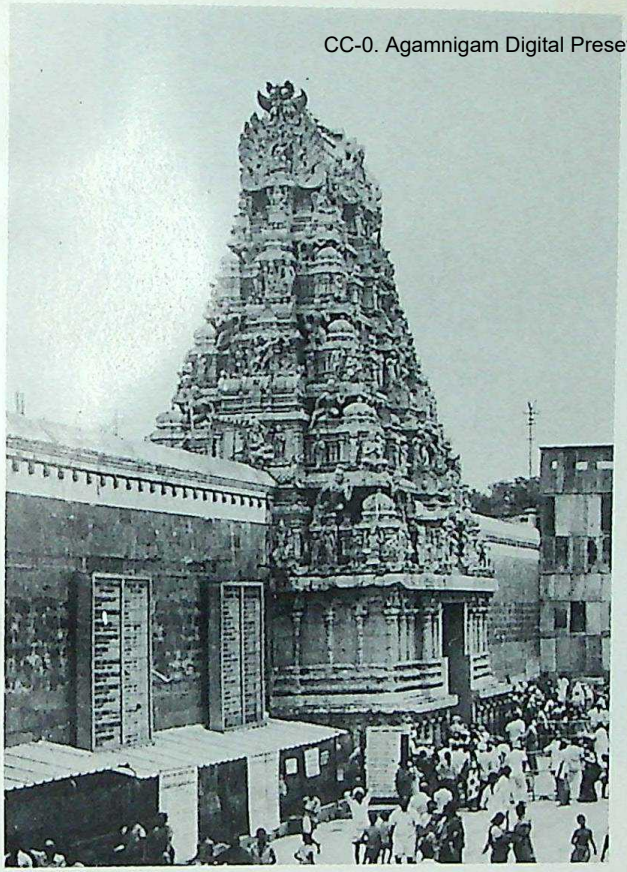
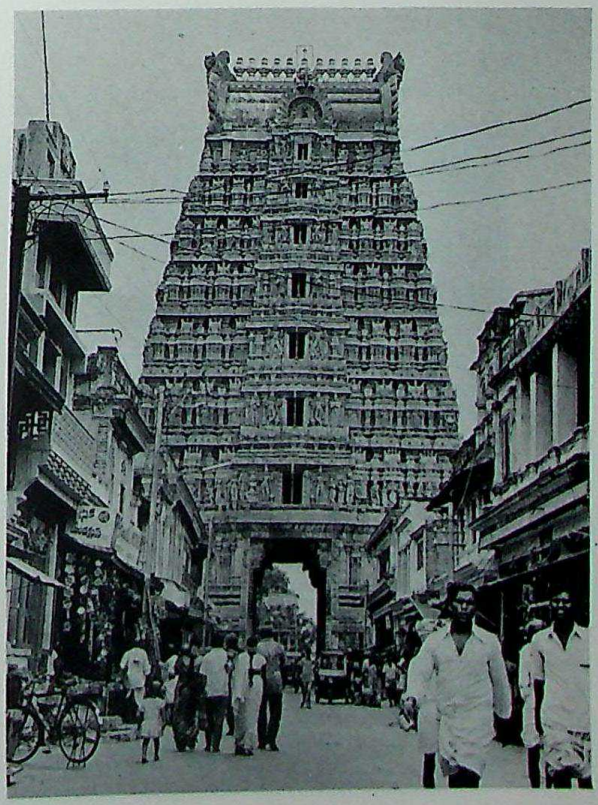


Plate 226. Tirumalai. Outer *gopura*-entrance. Later Cōḷa/Yādavarāya. *c.* A.D. 1150-1217.

Plate 227. Tirupati. Outer *gopura* of Śrī Govindarāja temple. Late Vijayanagara. A.D. 1624.



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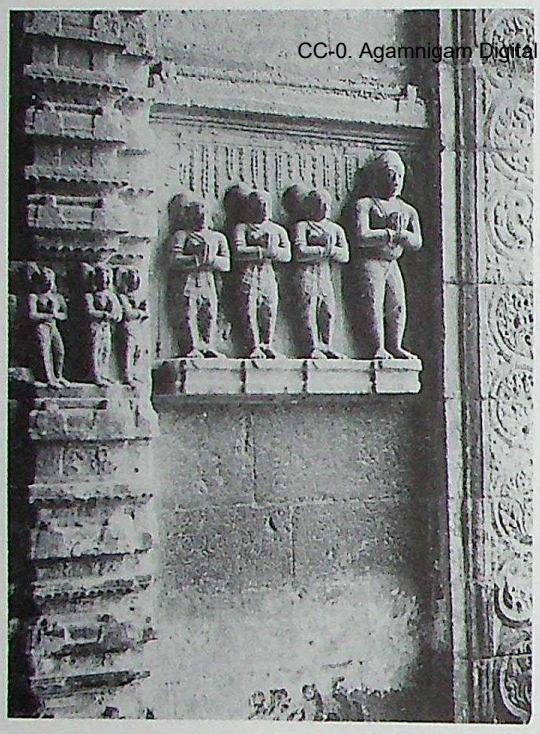
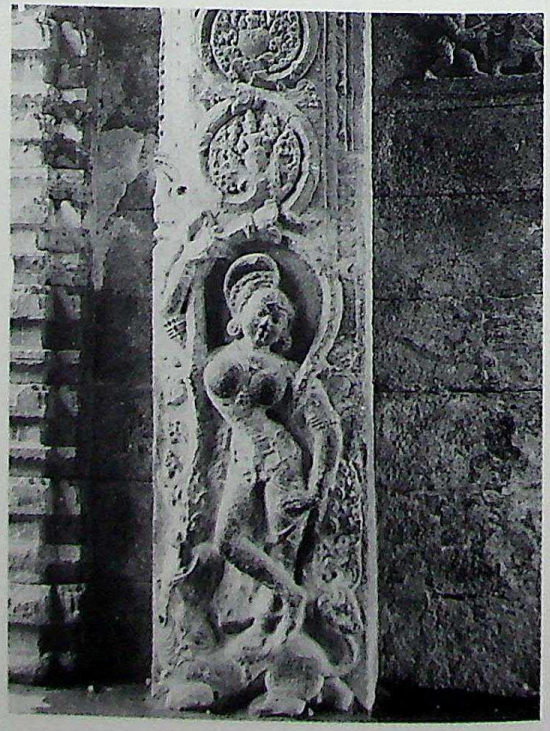


Plate 228. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, outer *gopura*. Portrait sculptures of the builder. Late Vijayanagara. A.D. 1624.

Plate 229. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, outer *gopura*, architectural details.

Plate 230. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, outer *gopura*.

Plate 231. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, sculpture at the entrance door.



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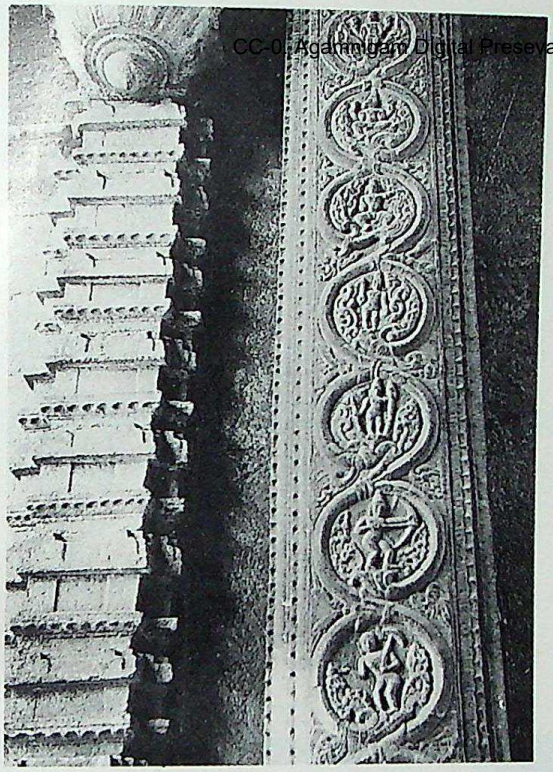
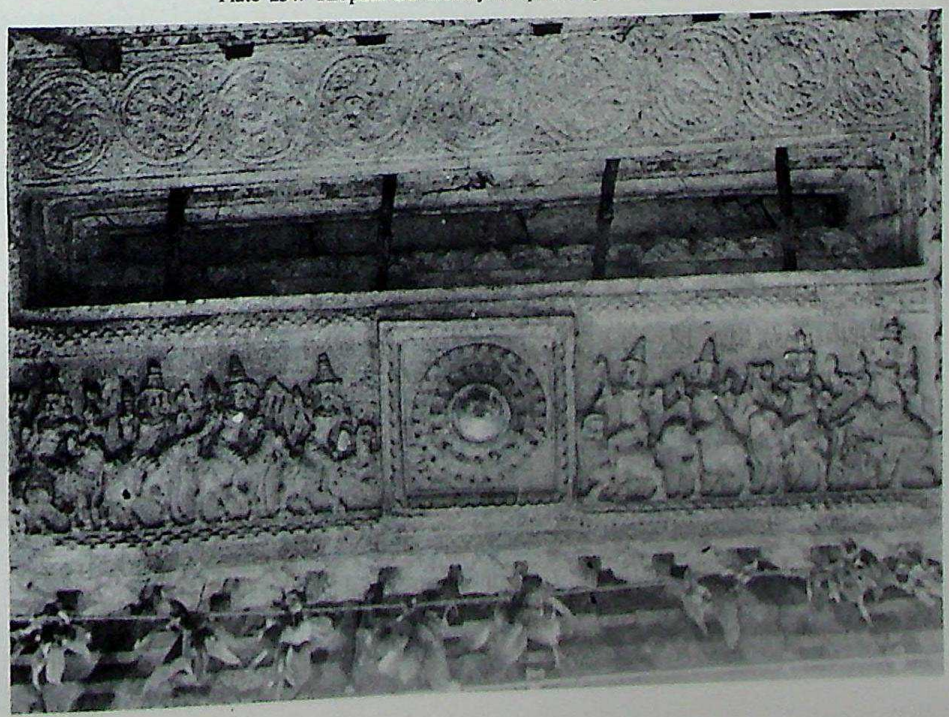


Plate 232. Tirupati. Outer *gopura*, entrance-door, Daśāvatāra.

Plate 233. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, entrance *gopura*-door step, Gaṅgā.

Plate 234. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, Dikpālas on the ceiling.



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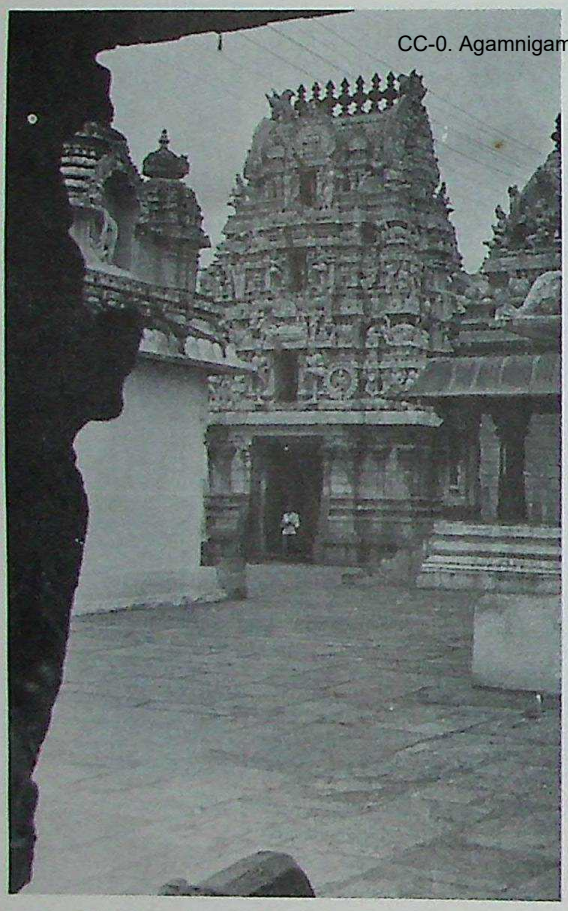
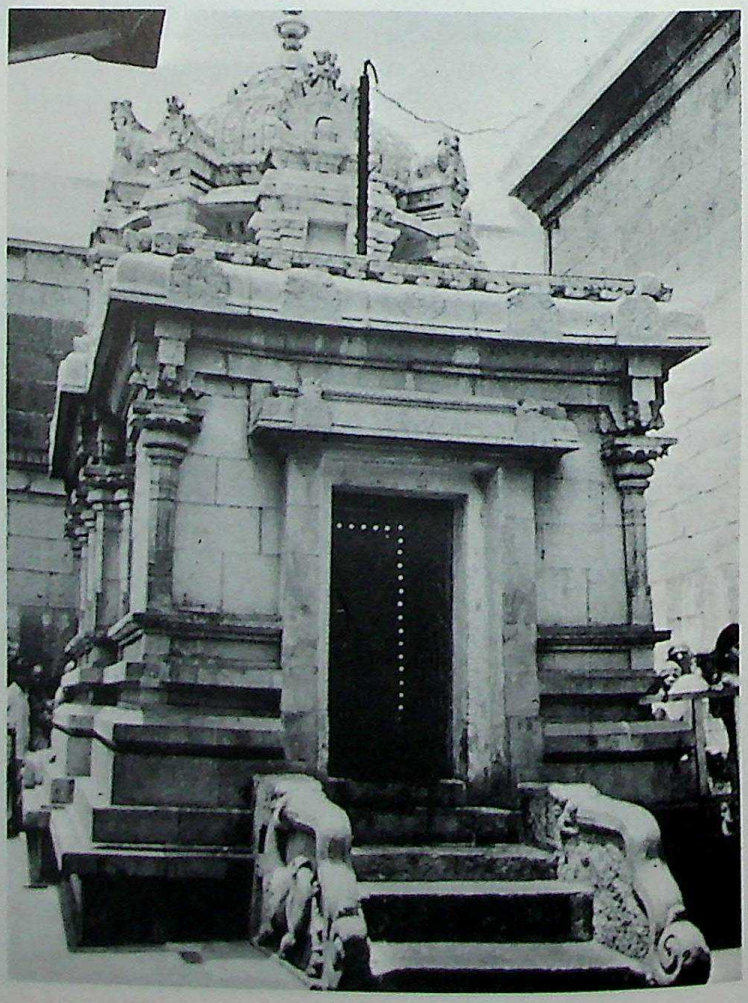


Plate 235. Tirupati. Govindarāja temple, inner *gopura*. Later Cōḷa/Yādvarāya. *c.* A.D. 1219.

Plate 236. Tirumalai. Varadarāja shrine. *c.* A.D. 1355.



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Some Aspects of Gopura: Tirumalai and Tirupati Temples in the Light of Epigraphical Data

K.V. RAMAN

I

TIRUMALAI and Tirupati, well-known pilgrim centers of south India, have two fairly large temples (for Viṣṇu Śrīnivāsa and Govindarāja respectively) that abound in architectural and sculptural material of considerable interest. They also contain graphic and highly informative inscriptions which have been published in several volumes. Though the historical data of these inscriptions have been fairly extensively utilized by scholars, the full implications of the inscriptional data having a bearing on the architecture and sculptural art of these temples have not been deduced.[1] In this paper, then, I intend to present the architectural and sculptural pattern followed in these temples on the basis of the data provided by these inscriptions. The temples in question possess some firmly datable structures which have come down to the present times without consequential later tampering. There are also inscriptions referring to the installation of the deities, which provide a firm basis for correlating the epigraphic data with the structural and stylistic norms that prevailed here. Particularly, I wish to discuss three *gopuras* in the complex; of these, two belong to the thirteenth century and the third to the seventeenth century; also I shall discuss a datable shrine.

GOPURAS

The Tirumalai-Tirupati temples have variety of *gopuras* belonging to different periods, and each one presents certain peculiar features in their elevational disposition as well as their sculptural content. I shall dwell on the outermost *gopuras* at Tirumalai and Tirupati and the innermost *gopura* at the latter place. They provide a good study in contrast.

1. The main outer *gopura* at Tirumalai is a stone structure with molded *adhiṣṭhāna* (base) and *kuḍya-stambhas* (pilasters) belonging to the twelfth century A.D. (Plate 226). On the *adhiṣṭhāna* is an inscription of the local chieftain Yādavarāya dated in his twelfth year, equivalent to 1217 A.D.[2] It records his consort's gift of cows to the presiding deity, Lord of Veṅgaḍam. It is not a foundation inscription, but it indicates that the *gopura* was already in existence in the early years of the thirteenth century. The *gopura* was probably built during the reign of his predecessor, Gattideva Yādavarāya, a contemporary and patron of saint Rāmānuja; he is credited with many constructions in these temples through the inspiration of his teacher. This means that the *gopura* can be dated to the later half of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The *adhiṣṭhāna* of the *gopura* is built in two *talas*,

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each *tala* supported, as it were, by a row of pilasters. There are no *koṣṭhas* or niches in the walls. The pilasters are short but well-executed. They have capitals of modest size and have bell-shaped corbels (*poṭikā*), which became the normally adopted pattern during the twelfth century in Tamil Nadu. The superstructure, of modest proportions (about 15 meters from ground level), is of brick and mortar but completely renovated.

Architecturally the simple moldings in the *adhiṣṭhāna* and the pattern of the pilasters are clearly in later Coḷa-Pāṇḍya style adopted by the chieftains in all their territories. The *gopura*-entrance has been built in the tradition of Tamil Nadu. Many of the features of Hoysaḷa-Vijayanagara tradition introduced during the Vijayanagar times are conspicuous by their absence in this *gopura*. For example, the practice of showing at the entrance doorstep the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā standing on the *makara* and holding creepers coiling up is absent. Similarly, the elaborate workmanship of the ceiling of the *gopura*, often showing the *aṣṭadikpālas*, is also not there. The *gopura* is rather simple in design and has no sculptural motifs and other embellishments that were subsequently to become the normal features of the typical Vijayanagar *gopuras*.

2. In sharp contrast to this *gopura* is the imposing and beautiful *gopura* at the main entrance gate of the Govindarājasvāmi temple at Tirupati, down the hill (Plate 227). It is also a well-dated structure, having been built in 1624 A.D. by Matla Anantarāja, whose portrait sculpture with the inscription is found boldly carved on the wall of the *gopuradvāra*[3] (Plate 228). The stone *adhiṣṭhāna* is indeed a huge and a massive pile which rises to a height of about ten meters. Above it soars the tower in brick and mortar in nine *talas* to a total height of about fifty meters. The architectural features of this *gopura* and the sculptural embellishments and other designs and patterns there offer conspicuous variations as well as some new elements and features that were introduced during the Vijayanagar times and zealously continued by their vassal-chieftains. In many ways this pattern was a departure from the twelfth-thirteenth century tradition of Tamil Nadu and shows also the beautiful fusion of the Tamil and the Karnataka-Andhra tradition. Therefore this *gopura* deserves a more detailed study.

ADHIṢṬHĀNA

The *adhiṣṭhāna* is indented with many projections and recessions and a series of *salilāntara*-bays and *koṣṭhas*-niches on the *kuḍyastambhas*. The bold and beautiful *kumbhapañjara* pilasters have circular pillar-shafts, highly fluted and bulbous *kumbha*-bases and miniature *kūṭas* at the top of the capital (Plate 229). The vine-foliage is shown emanating from the mouth of a *makara*. All these features are highly evolved and stylized when compared to some of the parallels at the *gopura* of Tirumala.

DVĀRAŚĀKHĀ

The stone inner and outer door way-frames of the *gopura* also have undergone tremendous evolution and possess rich embellishment carrying a series of interesting sculptures. The outer doorframe (looking east) at the top center has for its *lalāṭa-bimba* a large-sized relief sculpture of Kṛṣṇa in reclining posture looking at the visitors, as it were, from the top (Plate 230). This kind of *lalāṭa-bimba* is rather rare, indeed not met with in the earlier *gopuras* of Tamil Nadu, though it was common in the later Calukya and the Hoysaḷa temples.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The sculptures found on the inner and outer doorframes of the *gopura* show scenes of the Daśāvatāra, Rāmāyaṇa, Bhāgavata Purāṇa and also saints. *Mithunas* in various acts of love making are conspicuous because possibly at this period they were considered auspicious. A cow and calf, Sūrya, Candra, *Śaṅkha-nidhi* and *Padma-nidhi* were also considered auspicious at the entrance. The depiction of Śrī-Vaiṣṇava saints are noteworthy and shows the Tamil influence.

GOPURA ENTRANCE (INSIDE)

The entrance corridor of the *gopura* is noted for its excellent and bold carvings and sculptures. In the entry-way there are, on either side, the graceful two figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, holding the creeper with one hand and the other resting on the hip (Plate 231). This tradition of depicting in human form the

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holy rivers of India had commenced in the Gupta period and had been adopted in some of the early Cálukyan to the late Cálukyan, Hoysaḷa and Vijayanagar temples. In the Tamil country, these figures are not met with in the earlier traditions, Pallava, Paṇḍya or Coḷa either. But from Vijayanagar times, this was introduced there also. In all the Vijayanagar and Nayaka *gopuras* of consequence in Tamil country, this motif is invariably found in the entry-way. In two of the door-steps in this *gopura*, the ladies are shown dancing on the *makara* accompanied by a drummer and Viḍuṣaka. A creeper emanates from the *makara's* mouth, going up in circular coils. Within each circular coil, miniature sculptures of Viṣṇu's *avataras* (Plates 232–233) and Vaiṣṇava saints or Āḻvār are shown in a serial array, one above the other up to the ceiling level. This also is a new feature introduced during Vijayanagar times, not met with in the earlier *gopuradvaras* in Tirupati and elsewhere. Besides these, there are good sculptures depicting Kṛṣṇa sporting with *gopīs*, Viṣṇu-Mohinī with *ṛsis*, Kṛṣṇa killing Putana, Kṛṣṇa stealing butter, and hunter-woman. There are portrait-figures sculptured in high relief depicting Matla Anantaraya, the builder of this *gopura*, standing with his six wives, all in *añjali-hasta* to express devotion to the deity of the temple. This is also a departure from the old ways. There are, for instance, a large number of *gopuras* built by the imperial Cóḷas and Paṇḍyas, but in none of these can the portrait-sculptures of the builders be seen. This became a specific and indeed a common feature of the Vijayanagar times, for example, Kṛṣṇadevaraya's portrait at the north *gopura* of the Naṭarāja temple, Cidambaram.

Ornamental and sculptural panels are also depicted on the ceilings, among them the rectangular panel in which are the *aṣṭadikpālas*, the guardian deities of the eight cardinal directions (Plate 234). This variety of ceiling was popular in the temples of the Karnataka area as can be seen in many early and late Cálukya, Noḷamba and Hoysaḷa temples. This was not the practice in Tamil Nadu until the Vijayanagar *gopuras*, these apparently adopted from the Karnataka tradition.

THE INNER GOPURA AT GOVINDARAJA TEMPLE, TIRUPATI

There is one more *gopura* at the Govindarājasvāmi temple which is datable and worthy of consideration here (Plate 235). It is the small *gopura* in the innermost entrance (3rd entrance from outside). An inscription on the entry-wall of the *gopura* shows that it was in existence before 1219 A.D. So, this *gopura* was also built more or less during the same period or slightly later than the main *gopura* at Tirupati already described.

It is not surprising that they share the common stylistic characteristics such as their modest size, absence of sculptural embellishments in the doorframe and the entrance corridor, plain ceiling and the *pratoli*-pilasters already described.

CONCLUSIONS

The study of these three dated *gopuras*—two belonging to the thirteenth and the one to the seventeenth century—highlights the differences that had developed in all aspects: the elaborateness in the *adhiṣṭhāna*, the exuberance of the *devakoṣṭhas* and the pilaster patterns, the luxuriantly sculptured designs of the *pratoli*-frame, the introduction of the *lalāṭabimba* at the top of the doorway, the introduction of Gaṅgā and Yamunā at the lower ends of the *pratoli*-pilasters, the introduction of miniature figures of Tamil saints and other motifs like Daśāvatāras in the vine-loops on the surface of the entry-way pilasters, the elaborate workmanship in the ceilings and introduction of the large sculptural panels (illustrating the Rāmāyaṇa and Bhāgavata-Purāṇa) on the walls of the corridor of *gopuradvāra* and also the practice of carving portrait-sculptures of the patrons of the construction.

II

In the first inner *prākāra* of the Śrinivāsa temple at Tirumalai, there exist a few dated structures which have some interesting architectural features. Here attention is drawn to the shrine of Varadarāja (Plate 236).

This is a small but beautiful temple standing on the southeastern corner on the clear land. It has come down in an undisturbed condition. Engraved on its wall and the *adhiṣṭhāna* are inscriptions of the fourteenth century. There is one dated in the nineteenth year of Śriranganatha Yādavarāya (*c.* 1355 A.D.). One other inscription of his reign is dated *c.* 1388 A.D.[4]

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They are not foundation inscriptions, but from them it can be inferred that the shrine existed before 1355 A.D. Judging by its style, it seems datable to the later Paṇḍya-early Vijayanagara transitional period and therefore provides a structural landmark. It is a very compact little shrine with a square sanctum, an *antarala* and a *mukhamaṇḍapa*. The *adhiṣṭhāna* is composed of a plain *upāna*, a low *jagatī* and *tripaṭṭa kumuda*. Above the *adhiṣṭhāna*, the wall space is indented with short pilasters with a bell-shaped corbel. The eve or *koḍuṅgai* over the *prastara* is rather short and unlike the long ones of the Vijayanagar period. The *nāsī*-arches over the *kapota* are also stylized. Next we see the *vyālamālā* marking the *gṛhapiṇḍi* and over it the circular *grīvā* and the bulbous *śikhara*. The *gajavyāla* balustrade for the entrance *sopāna* is also noteworthy. So the shrine has features characteristic of the latter Pāṇḍya-Vijayanagara transition. Here again the entrance door is devoid of the Gaṅgā-Yamunā sculptures and also the creeper motif that became normal features for all the shrines of Vijayanagara times.

One other important feature in the shrine is the presence of the Śrī Vaiṣṇava *ūrdhvapuṇḍra* mark as the *lalāṭa-bimba* of the entrance door. The question as to when the *ūrdhvapuṇḍara* marks came to be carved on the walls of the shrines in Tamil Nadu has been a subject of debate. They are not seen in the early shrines, for example of the Coḷa period. But in Vijayanagar structures such as at Hampi, Senji, and the Varadarajasvāmi temple in Kāñcī, they are very prominently carved, usually flanked by the *śaṅkha* and *cakra*. But here is seen one of the earliest such carvings, datable to the beginning of the middle of the fourteenth century. The introduction of the cult of Varadarāja at Tirumalai and the construction of separate shrine for him within the first *prākāra* in close proximity to Lord Veṅkaṭeśvara is also significant. It again underlines the impact of Śrí Rāmānuja's tenets and the influence of his disciples in this temple. Lord Varadarāja of Kāñcī was the favorite deity (*ārādhanadeva*) in his private worship of Śrī Rāmānuja for whom alone among the saints there is a shrine in the Tirumalai temple. The orientation of Varadarāja shrine is also worthy of note, facing the main deity of the temple, namely Śrīnivāsa. The implication is that all the other shrines in a complex should gravitate towards the main presiding deity.

NOTES

1. S.K. Aiyangar, *History of Tirupati*, Madras 1952; T.K.T. Viraraghavacharya, *History of Tirupati (The Tiruvengadam Temple)*, Vols. I–II, Tirupati 1953–1954.

2. *Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanam Inscriptions*, Vol. I, No. 84.

3. Viraraghavacharya, *History*, Vol. I, p. 369.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

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41

A Datable Sculpture of Nammāḻvār

K.V. RAMAN

A FAIRLY BIG shrine for Nammāḻvār stands at the foot of Tirumalai hill in a location called Āḻvār Tīrtham or Kapila Tīrtham. The temple's foundation inscription records the construction of the Āḻvār's *vimānam*, i.e. the structure from the *upāna* (sub-plinth) to the *stūpī* (finial) at the top, the *maṇḍapa* (porch) and the *maligai* (Sanskrit *mālikā*) or the *tiruchutrumaligai* or the cloister around the sanctum. It was the pious charity (*dharmam*) of one Pallavarayar of Tuṇjalūr (in Pāṇḍya country) who, according to another record, made a grant in 1285 A.D.[1] So the Nammāḻvār shrine-complex mentioned above can be ascribed to the last quarter of the thirteenth century A.D.

Here I do not intend to discuss the architectural details of this shrine but rather to draw the attention of scholars to the beautiful *mūla-vigraha* (cult-image) of Nammāḻvār to whom the shrine is dedicated (Plate 237). There is a very interesting Sanskrit inscription in *grantha* characters engraved on the wall of the shrine which thus describes Nammāḻvār: "Here lives the Saint (*muni*) who possessed divine knowledge (*divya-jñāna*) and who, perceiving that the times were hostile and confused by Kali, felt the compassion for the mortals and initiated them in the *Brahmavidyā* or the knowledge of the Supreme Being."[2]

This description of Nammāḻvār is in keeping with the sentiments of the Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas (i.e. Vaiṣṇavas of the Rāmānuja sect) who rever Nammāḻvār (also called Saṭagopa) as the greatest Āḻvār and his *Tiruvāymoḻi* as the *Drāvida-veda*. Even Rāmānuja was a great devotee of Nammāḻvār, whose soul-stirring Tamil hymns inspired him in the formulation of his tenets. Hence it is not surprising to find a separate shrine for Nammāḻvār which, in fact, is in the form of a separate temple-unit with its own *tirumadil, gopura*-entrance, *vimāna* and *mahāmaṇḍapa*.

The *mūlaber* (cult-image) of Nammāḻvār is a bold and expressive sculpture with considerable iconographic interest. The saint is shown seated in *ardhapadmāsana*. His left hand is in the *dhyāna* or *yogahasta*, which is very appropriate for Nammāḻvār, who was steeped in silent *yoga* form for several years under the tamarind tree at his birth place, Kurugūr (Āḻvār Tirunagari in Tirunelveli District). His right hand is in the *vyākhyāna-mudrā*. His eyes also show him absorbed in *yoga*. His matted hair or *jaṭā-bandha* is rendered in a bun-like knot tied with the *tulasī-mālā*. This hairdo is a characteristic trait of this Āḻvār. He wears a *tulasī* garland besides a *hāra* and the *udarabandha*. The *tōḷ malai* or the shoulder-garland has been beautifully shown in the sculpture itself. The *Yajñopavīta* is significantly omitted to show that Nammāḻvār, though belonging to the non-Brāhman classes attained the *divya-jñāna*. The *padmarekhā* shown both in the palm of the hand and the leg as well as the elongated ear lobe indicate to the Saint's *Mahā-Yōgī* character.

By the side of the sculpture of Nammāḻvār are

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shown other saints including Madura-Kavi-Āḻvār, Nammāḻvār's direct disciple, as well as Tirumaṅgai Āḻvār, Rāmānuja and Manavāḷa Mahāmuni. But all of them are depicted in smaller size to show the importance of Nammāḻvār in the galaxy of the Vaiṣṇava saints.

This figure affords a good example of the sculptural style of the thirteenth century in Tamil Nadu. It also shows that the temple was a dynamic institution providing accommodation to new cults which had the sanction of the people at large. The Āḻvār-cult developed after the ninth century A.D. and reached its zenith under the leadership of saints like Nāthamuni and Rāmānuja. The Āḻvārs were revered as *Divya-sūris*; their Tamil hymns were known as *divya-prabandha* (divine songs equal to the Vedas), and the temples in which they were sung were called *divya-deśas*. This concept became the central theme of Śrī-Vaiṣṇava thought in the south, setting in motion a more popular and liberal philosophy as enshrined in Rāmānuja's teachings. Hence there is a separate temple for Nammāḻvār here, and he is described in the inscription as the one possessing *divya-jñāna*.

NOTES

1. *Tirupati Devasthanam Inscription*, Vol. I, p. 78 (No. 202 G.T.).

2. *Ibid.*, No. 201 G.T.

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Inscription at Mūvar-koil, Koḍumbāḷūr, Tamil Nadu

K.V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

THE KOḌUMBĀḶŪR undated record ascribed firmly to Bhūti-Vikramakesari, the Irukkuveḷ chieftain of Ko-nāḍu, has been an important source not only for understanding the role of Irukkuveḷs of Ko-nāḍu in the Pallava-Pāṇḍya history, but also for assessing ultimately the date for the temples (Mūvar-koil) that this member of that clan built. The record was first noted in the *Annual Report on Epigraphy* (1908) and was subsequently published as No. 14 in the *Inscriptions of Pudukkoṭṭai State* in 1929. With its 24 lines of text forming 11 full stanzas and fragments of two others, one each at the opening and at the end respectively, it covers a wall space of 4′ 10″×4′ 1″ in what has been called the transitional variety of *grantha* script, in a size of more than one inch for the letters. It has been already considered by K.A.N. Sastri,[1] who published a reading and its date. The record has become so familiar, primarily due to the magnificent group of temples of which it forms a valuable part, that its exact thrust has created two broad groups,[2] one which believes that it belongs to the latter part of the tenth century A.D. and the other which believes that it is datable to the close of the ninth century A.D.; a marginal third view would like to place it in the opening decade of the tenth century A.D. Some scholars want to place the inscription more specifically before or after the most historic event of the century, the battle of Śrīpurambiam in the Kāverī delta area, or far after it, that is in the last two decades of the ninth century A.D., when there was a twilight before the ascending glory under Parāntaka and after the sweeping victorious pace of Āditya I. This paper seeks the coeval data which may help determine the record's date without contradicting the character of the monuments and thus also to consider its art and architecture.

Mallikārjuna, the pupil of Vidyārāśi, mentioned in the Koḍumbāḷūr record, is also known from another seemingly contemporary record, though undated, from Tagaḍūr,[3] then in the Noḷamba territory. The Śaiva teacher Vidyārāśi (represented in the Tagaḍūr record as worshipping a *liṅga*) but here cited as if in a footnote was coeval with the Kali-coreśvara, Pallaveśvara, Bhogeśvara, and Nanneśvara temples at Tagadūr and the Bhujaṅgeśvara at Kāñcī. If this Vidyārāśi was the preceptor of Mallikārjuna, then he could have flourished before 878 A.D. or between Śaka 800 (878 A.D.) and Śaka 815 (892 A.D.), and his disciples at the Koḍumbāḷūr temples of Bhūti-Vikramakesari would have been active at the very beginning of the last quarter of the ninth century. Since the reference in the Koḍumbāḷūr record seems to imply that Vidyārāśi was then alive, Mallikārjuna must have been middle-aged.

It is further known that the father of Bhūti-Vikramakesari or Maravaṇ Pūdi, Cattaṇ Maravaṇ *alias* Samarābhirāma, had two wives, namely, Arindigai and Anupamā; the former was the daughter of Cattampūdi or Ko Iḷaṅgo-Adiarayar of the Nārttamalai (Vijayālayacoḷiśvara) record.[4] Hence, Maṛa-

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vaṇ lived a generation later than Ko-Iḷaṅgo Adiarayar. Pūdi Arindigai is referred to in the Tiruvoṟṟiyūr record, dated in the ninth regnal year of Kampavarmā. Since it is known that Kampavarmā was the father of Aparājita, himself a contemporary of Āditya I until his 26th year, the early records should be datable to the forties of the ninth century, the same date assigned to Pūdi Arindigai by virtue of being the daughter of Ko-Iḷaṅgo-Adiarayar. Thus Maṟavaṇ Pūdi, who was a subordinate of Nandivarmā III in his Kilūr record[5] in about 854 A.D., would have been none too old at that time. All these seem to show that he could not have built the Mūvar-koil after 880 A.D.

It is indeed unfortunate that the opening part of the record is lost, but from the way in which the dynastic glory is detailed, there may not have been any regnal year quotation at the beginning. It could have occurred at the close of the record, which is also now lost. Since the opening lines are on the very top course of the wall, they may have been damaged at a time when, in the distant past, some repairs were done to the wall section. Pudukkoṭṭai *Durbār* records, however, do not refer to any such repairs.

The Velurpaḷayam Pallava record of Nandivarmā III refers to a Coḷa king, perhaps the father of Māṟavaṇ Pūdi as noted in the Koḍumbāḷūr inscription. It seems plausible that this Coḷa king had not yet extended his overlordship to the Irukkuveḷ chieftain contemporary with him, and so would not have been named in the opening or closing parts of the text, now missing. It is not known, however, if the diminished title is itself suggestive of a distant reference by Bhūti-Vikramakesari, who may have been fairly middle-aged at the time the temple was erected.

In this context, it is important to determine the elements that he borrowed from contemporary architecture of the Kāverī valley, whose upper tracts Pūdi controlled. In relation to the Aivar-koil monument also at Koḍumbāḷūr, this Mūvar-koil shows clear evolution. It is a via-media between a truly *sāndhāra* temple that the former apparently was and the structurally *nirandhāra* type that Mūvar-koil is, notwithstanding the *aḷīndra* passage behind the *hāra* in the upper floors at each of the two levels. This raises the possibility that the temple had indeed gone through some renovation in the Āditya period, when additions were made to the Aivar-koil. This is known from a fifteenth-year record of Āditya,[6] referring to Anantaṇ-Paḷiyili,[7] who, from out of understanding of the Nārttāmalai-koḍumbāḷūr nexus, was a second generation removed from Cāttan Paḷiyili of the Paḷiyiliśvaram cave-cum-structural temple record at Nārttāmalai. There is a visual dichotomy in the sculptural and architectural *élan* of the Mūvar-koil, the sculpture suggesting a *local* idiom, the architecture suggesting an affiliated *regional* school. Thus the following stages of the temple's development seem possible:

I. Maṟavaṇ Pūdi's Mūvar-koil was built when he was middle aged, not far removed from a pre- or early-Āditya period. At this time he probably had the record engraved.

II. It was reconstructed in the time of Āditya, perhaps during the time of Pūdi's sons, Āditya and Parāntaka, when all the three temples were still standing. At this time, the record got damaged at its beginning and end.

III. The Pudukkoṭṭai *Durbār*, in post-medieval times, noted one temple almost gone and the remaining two in exquisite but badly dismantled state.[7]

IV. After conservation done under the Pudukkoṭṭai *Durbār* as well as later, the present condition has come about.

If the above stages are properly postulated, then the Māheśvara temple that Pūdi erected would have been restored in the Āditya period, in the then local style seen elsewhere in the upper Kāverī valley, as at Tiruccendurai, built in the early years of the sons of Pūdi in Irukkuveḷ territory.

The record provides indirect support for the stages proposed above. The entire record is in Sanskrit, unusual for early Coḷa and even the Muttaraiyara records as well as those of subsequent periods. These are invariably in Tamil; they do not provide a similar geneology; and they are much shorter. Most influential, then, and from contiguous areas are the Pallava and Pāṇḍya records. The Pāṇḍya royal charters, some ten in number, along with stone records at Tirupparamukunam and Anamalai, both of Pāṇḍya Jaṭila Parāntaka Neḍunjaḍaiaṇ, predominantly use Sanskrit. This use continues until the end of the eighth century, although parts of some inscriptions are in Tamil as well. Almost all thirty Pallava charters, and even many of the lithic records, have an extensive Sanskrit part and a lesser Tamil section, sometimes added later, except in copper-plate charters, where they may be coeval. The Irukkuveḷs maintained a direct liaison with the Pallavas until the sixties of the ninth century, when, perhaps during the time of Nṛpatuṅga, they broke from Pallava overlord-

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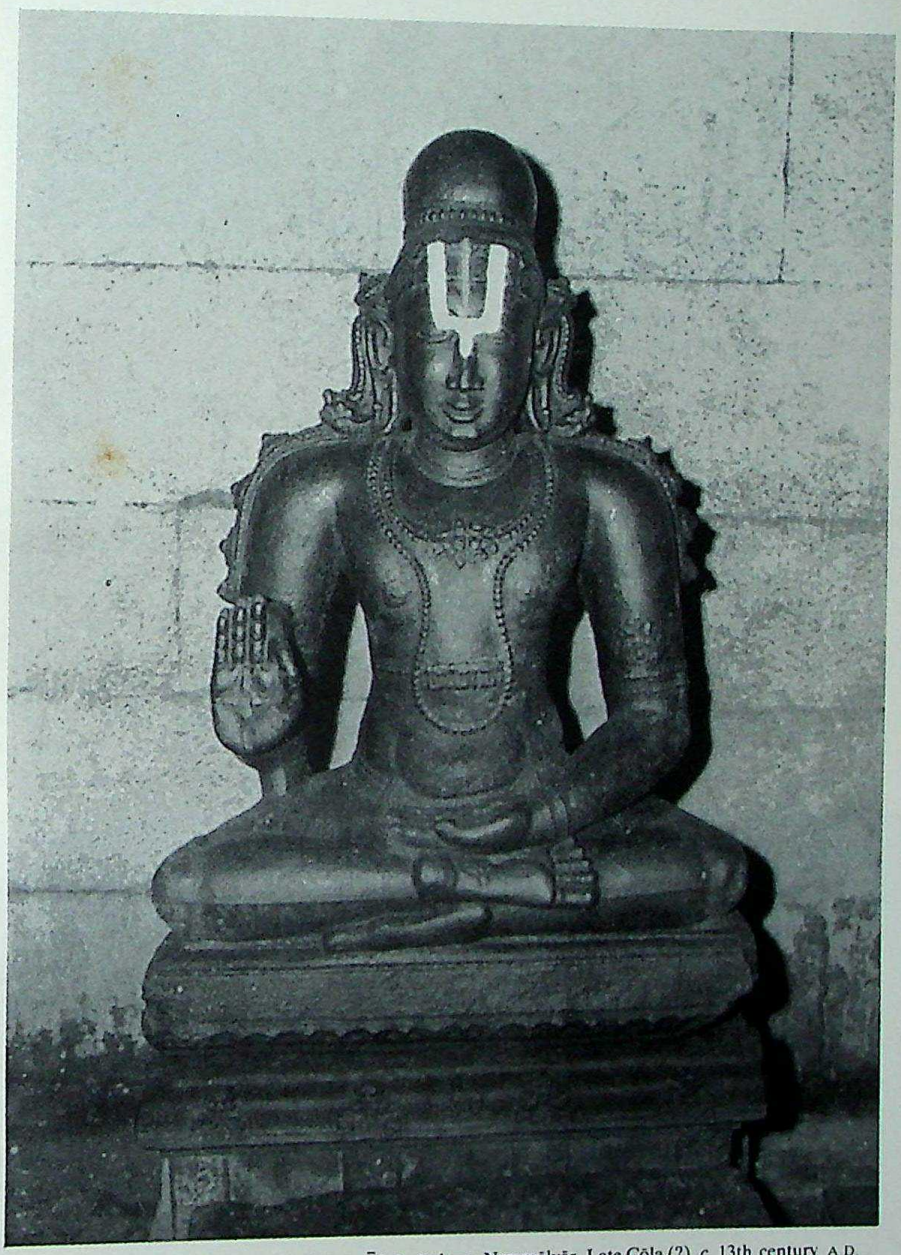

Plate 237. Tirupati, Tirumalai hill-foot, Āḻvār-tīrtham. Nammāḻvār. Late Cōḻa (?). *c.* 13th century A.D.

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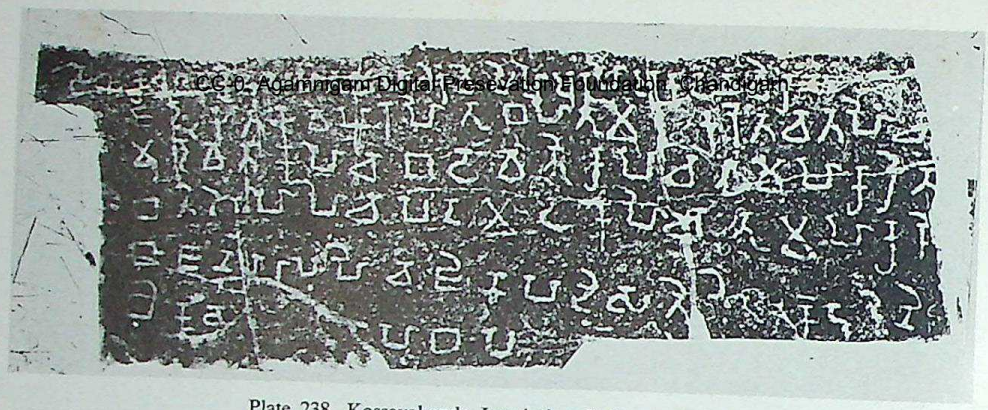
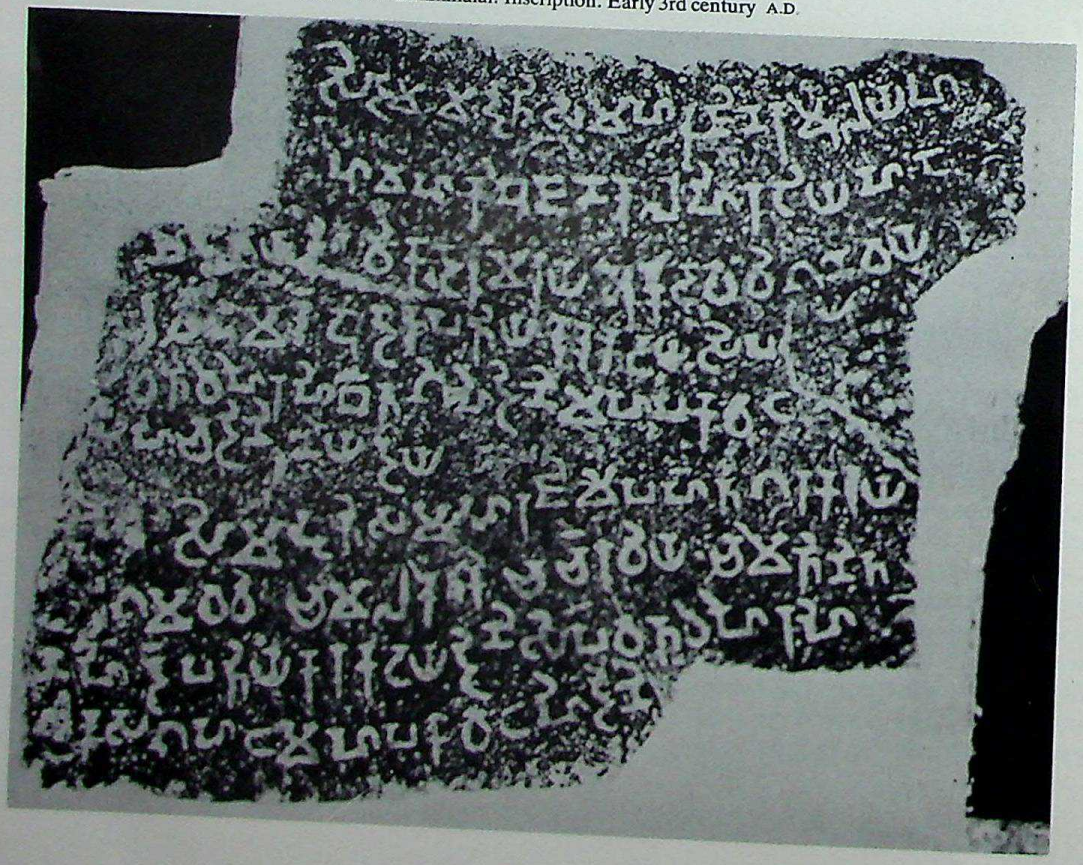


Plate 238. Kossavakanda. Inscription. 2nd century A.D.

Plate 239. Lihinimalai. Inscription. Early 3rd century A.D.



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ship. The Tamil record of Nṛpatuṅga's seventh year, at Nārttāmalai. shows the liaison continuing, although thereafter there is no evidence of Pallava intrusion into the Kānanāḍu or Ko-nāḍu. Can the Koḍumbāḷūr record be placed around the time Pallava control over the terrain was ended, around 865 A.D. and the repairs of the Āditya period assigned to around the time immediately succeeding the decisive Śrīpurambiam battle, around 886 A.D.? Its architectural plan follows closely the Paḷiyiliccpuram shrine of Nārttāmalai in having only a sanctum, a *mukhamaṇḍapa* and a *nandimaṇḍapa* within it, corresponding to the *mukhamaṇḍapamum-Iṣavakkoṭṭilumisavamum* of the Paḷiyiliccpuram record. The unified *nṛtta* or *snāpana maṇḍapa*, with a transverse spread covering all three temples, only highlights the disintegrated nature of the temple unit. It is thus a formative Iṟukkuvēḷ feature, as it does not integrate the *nṛtta maṇḍapa* with the rest, at plinth level, as happened consistently in the late ninth- and early tenth-century examples in the lower Kāverī Valley.

The consolidation of Māheśvara Śaivism, which took place in a big monastery (*bṛhan-maṭha*) here corresponds with information in an inscription in the Pāṇḍya rock-cut cave at Kuḍumiyāmalai in the Muttarayar territory. There, in the celebrated musical records, a Rudrāchārya's royal disciple, who is a *parama-māheśvara*, is mentioned as having formulated the *svarāgamas* that were basic to the musical records. This colophon is in Sanskrit, as the musical record is, which harmonizes with the Sanskrit tradition current in the seventh-eighth centuries in Pāṇḍya and Pallava territory. The Rudrāchārya may be a precursor of Vidyārāśi in this region.

The use of the Pallava-*grantha* script, occasionally with a variant script, as in the Malayaḍi-kurici record from deep in the Pāṇḍyan heartland, shows an evolution of Vaṭṭeḻuttu taking place throughout the Pāṇḍya-Irukkuveḷ territory before and during this period. The territory, up to the adjacent and contiguous areas of the present-day Salem and North Arcot Districts, was perhaps Pūdi's, appropriated into the Noḷamba territory subsequently or about that time.

The Mūvarkoil record is thus a landmark, although the Pūdi record under consideration is entirely in *grantha* characters, indicating its greater affinity to a Pallava mode than to others and probably suggesting its date in the *grantha*-Vaṭṭeḻuttu evolution. Vernacular words, however, are Sanskritized unlike most Pallava records. Thus it may date not later than the last quarter of the ninth century and perhaps during the first half of that quarter century.

Notwithstanding the Irukkuveḷ's Pallava overlordship and a subsequent Coḷa overlordship, the common *vṛtta śikhara*, already current at this stage, is not employed, but rather the square *śikhara* was used, part of the idiom of the Pāṇḍyas, Western Gaṅgas and Noḷambas. The absence of the *vedī* member in the basement would place it before the time of Parāntaka, after which this member became increasingly common. This stage thus seems to be a hiatus between the Irukkuveḷs and Coḷa overlordship.

Vidyārāśi and his worthy Māheśvara disciple Mallikārjuna are mentioned with Pūdi primarily in reference to the donation and establishment of the large *maṭha* (monastery) at Kōḍumbāḷūr. The *vimānatraya* which he raised for the Kālāmukha teacher was the nucleus for the subsequent establishment of a large *maṭha*; with this Pūdi also made a grant of sixteen villages. The *vimānatraya* involves a single complex of triple shrines, facing west in this case, each temple seemingly dedicated to an aspect of Maheśa, namely Aghora to the south and Vamādeva to north, and the central shrine reflecting the Tatpuruṣa aspect. The singular in *Maheśvaram pratiṣṭhāpya* would also reinforce this view. Originally, instead of the *liṅgas* found today in the two temples, there was probably a *mukha liṅga*, at least in the central shrine, consistent with Māheśvara Śaivism. Unfortunately the northernmost shrine has been lost, but the surviving central and southern temples have sculptural programs that suggest the Māheśvara cult and *vimānatraya* concept:

		Aditala	*Śalā*	*Grīvā*
Central shrine	E	Ardhanārī	Umāsahita	Indra
	S	Missing	missing	Dakṣiṇāmūrti
	W	Door	missing	Umāmaheśvara
	N	Bhikṣāṭana	Viṣṇu	Śiva-liṅgin
Southern shrine	E	Gaṅgādhara	Kālāri	Tripurāntaka
	S	Vireśvara	Naṭamūrti	Gajasaṁhāra
	W	doorway	Harihara	missing
	N	Bhikṣāṭana	Umā-prasāda	Umāprasāda

This shows that the southern shrine, which represents the Aghora aspect, had the *saṁhara* or terrific forms of Śiva, e.g. Vireśvara, Kālāri, Tripurāntaka, and Gajāntaka, whereas the central shrine, which represents the Tatpuruṣa *liṅga*, contains *saumya* aspects, e.g. Ardhanārī, Umāsahita *liṅgin*, Dakṣiṇāmūrti, and Bhikṣāṭana but not Aghōra aspects. The lost northern shrine, then, should have represented

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the Vamādeva aspect, perhaps with feminine sculptures relating to *śakti*, though they are now lost. Thus the *vimānatraya* here is an integrated ritual unit, anticipating by about a century the Great Temple at Tañjāvūr. There the large niche images on the inner ambulatory reflect Aghora to the south, Sadyojāta (Pradōṣamūrti) to the west and Vāmadeva (with a Devi figure) to the north; the Tatpuruṣa *liṅga* is represented in the sanctum, facing east, as the temple itself does. There again, Mahēśvara worship was clearly manifest and reinforced by the names of hymn singers variously identified in records there as Aghora Śiva and Iśāna Śiva, among other names.

The Vikrama Kesari title is used twice in the record: first, as the *anyanāmā* (other name), for example got in war (*samare*), and later as a figure of speech in relation to the qualifying phrase, e.g. *Koṭumpālūr purādri* and *Mattarisaṅgha mālikā-vivarodare*; it is thus not a permanently acquired *biruda*. He should indeed be referred to only as Maṛavaṉ Pūdi,[8] as is done in his inscriptions. The word *Minnamala* has been considered an enigma. It seemingly stands for a Sanskrit rendering of the Tamil word *minnāmalai*,[9] rain without lightning. It implies the qualities of head and heart of Pūdi, who was like a life-giving rain to the fields without being accompanied by destructive lightning. The desire is clearly to use only Sanskrit or Sanskritized words, as is seen even for the name of the place spelled Koṭumpālūr, not Koḍumbālūr, as at present in Tamil, or Koḍumbai of old Tamil.

The Mūvar-koil record and the temples associated with it, thus are unique in the traditions that they nurtured. In every sense, they form a line of cultural transition from one era to an other that took place in ninth-century Tamil Nadu in the central Kāverī valley, the nucleus area of the Imperial Coḷa hegemony from the tenth century onwards.

NOTES

1. K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, "The Koḍumbāḷūr Inscription of Vikrama-Kesari," *The Journal of Oriental Research Madras,* Vol. VII, Part I (1933), pp. 1–10.

2. S.R. Balasubrahmanyam, "Note on the Bhūti Vikramakesari of Koḍumbālur," *Journal of Indian Museums;* Vol. XVII-XX (1961–64), pp. 11–16; Douglas Barrett, *Early Cola Architecture and Sculpture,* London 1974.

3. H. Krishna Sastri, "Two Nolamba Inscriptions from Dharmapuri of the 9th century A.D.," Vol. X (1909–10), p. 64 and footnotes 4 and 7; also *see ibid*, p. 63. This latter refers to a grant of Marudaneri to a teacher, Ponnera-Gorava, a Śaiva "Samayin" during Mahēndra Noḷamba's time in Śaka 800 (*c.* A.D. 878). The record refers to the merchants Nidhiayaṇṇa, and caṇḍiganṇa, as having fixed toll on certain commodities for *dēvadāna*. These two merchants are involved in the two main Noḷamba records cited above.

4. K.G. Krishnan, "The Muttarayars," *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. V. 1–2 (1971–72), pp. 78–104.

5. K.G. Krishnan, "Kilur Inscription of Nandivarman, Year 16," *E.I.*, Vol. XXXII (1957–58), pp. 99–162.

6. *Ibid.*

7. K.R. Venkatarama Iyer, *A Manual of the Pudukkottai State,* Vol. II, Pudukottai, 1940 and 1944, Pls. 1–2.

8. In this article, Pūdi refers only to Bhūti-Vikramakesari.

9. I am grateful to Shri K.G. Krishnan for suggesting this.

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The Date of the Tenkāsi Viśvanātha Temple

N. SETHURAMAN

In order to determine the date of the Tenkāsi Viśvanātha temple and its *gōpura*, the date of Jaṭilavarman Arikesari Deva Parākrama Pāṇḍya must be determined first, a task that can be accomplished with considerable precision.

The Tenkāsi record No. 531/1909,[1] belonging to Jaṭilavarman Arikesari Deva Parākrama Pāṇḍya, was written in Śaka 1384 expired, regnal year 40, in the month Mithuna, on the 28th solar day, Apara Pakṣa 13, Friday and star Mirgaseera. This corresponds with Friday, June 25, 1462. His reign thus commenced forty years earlier, in 1422.

The Tenkāsi record No. 547/1917, belonging to the same Arikesari Deva Parākrama Pāṇḍya, was written in Śaka 1385, regnal year 42, in the month Karkataka on the solar day 30, Pūrva Pakṣa 13, Thursday and the star Uttirāḍam (Uttarāṣāḍa). This corresponds with Thursday, the 28th July, 1463. Thus the star Uttirāḍam in Karkataka of 1422 belongs to his first year. It was current on 4th July, so the king came to the throne prior to July 4, 1422, or, more specifically, between June 19 and July 4, 1422.

The Tenkāsi record No. 506/1909[2] states that Parākrama expired on a Full Moon day in the month of Mārgali in Saka 1385. That would have corresponded with December 24, 1463.

Jaṭilavarman Arikesari Deva Parākrama Pāṇḍya constructed the Tenkāsi Viśvanātha temple in stages. He performed the foundation function of the central shrine on 6th May, 1446. He consecrated the Śiva *liṅga* (Loŕd Viśvanātha) in the central shrine on 10th June, 1447. Prior to 16th April, 1451, the central shrine *ardhamaṇḍapa, mahāmaṇḍapa*, the Goddess shrine, and the *prākāra*-walls were completed. The monarch laid the foundation for the nine-story *gopura* on 3rd November, 1457. When it was under construction, he died on 24th December, 1463. The remaining work on the nine-story *gopura* was completed by Alagan Perumāḷ Kulaśekhara, the king's younger brother. All these dates are confirmed by stone records.

An inscription with a date corresponding to Friday, April 16, 1451 indicates that the following had been completed: On the bank of the river Chitrā at Tenkāsi, a new temple from the base to the top was constructed (*abinava upānāthi stūpi paryandham*); the *liṅga* (Lord Viśvanātha) was consecrated; the *ardhamaṇḍapa, mahāmaṇḍapa* and *sopāna* were built; an image of the Goddess for (the God's) Bed Chamber and other images were installed; and the *prākāra*-walls, necessary shelters and the central shrine tower were undertaken (*Āvaraṇa Gopurāthi-Ārambithu*). One learns more specifically from the same record that the *liṅga* had been consecrated approximately four years earlier, on June 10, 1447.

Record No. 531/1909[3] belonging to Parākrama's fortieth regnal year and dated Śaka 1384 in the month Mithuna on the 28th solar day, ba 13, Friday and the star Mirgaseera, that is, Friday June 25, 1462, states:

1. Arikesari Parākrama Pāṇḍya Deva dreamt

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that the god Viśvanātha of Kāśī commanded him to build a temple on the north bank of the Chitrā river in Tennāri Nādu because the one of Uttara Kāśī (Varanasi) had become ruined.

2. Thereupon the king began the foundation in the Śaka year 1368 expired, on a Friday in the month Ṛṣabā (Vaikāsi), which corresponded to the 10th solar day, Pūrva 10, the star Uttiram and Mīna Lagnā, that is, Friday, May 6, 1446.

3. Dakṣina Kāśī (Tenkāsi) was founded, the temple was built, images of Lord Viśvanātha and his consort were installed.

4. The *ardhamaṇḍapa, mahāmaṇḍapa, sopāna* and *prākāra*-walls were completed; a separate shrine for the Goddess was built; construction of *mahā gopura* (front tower) was commenced; a *sahasra linga* temple and Sakti *pītha* were built; Ṛṣabadēva and other images were installed; the Pidāri temple (Kāli) called Arikēsari Nangai was built; also constructed were the Arikesari Vināyaka temple, the kitchen and bathing hall.

5. All the above construction, including the commencement of the *mahā gopura*, was done within 17 years, from the 24th year to the 40th year.

Since the stone record No. 519/1909[4] states that Parākrama died six years after the beginning of the stone *gopura*, and since his death occurred on December 24, 1463, it can be surmised that this *mahā-gōpura* was commenced in 1457. It was completed by Parākrama's younger brother, Alagan Perumāḷ Kulasekara, who ruled from 1430 to 1474. This is evident from record No. 514/1909.[5]

Kulasekara made additions to the temple. Record No. 523/1909 of this temple belonging to Kulasēkara and dated Śaka 1395 (1473 A.D.) narrates the entire story of the temple's construction, including the *gopura*, carried out by Parākrama, the elder brother of Kulasekara. The record further states that Kulasekara constructed an *olakka maṇḍapa* (audience hall) in the temple. From Kulasekara's record No. 198/1895[6] on the south wall of the *maṇḍapa,* it is learnt that the *olakka maṇḍapa* was also called the Kulasekaran *maṇḍapa*. Kulasekarā's record No. 524/1909 of this temple[7] dated 1473 states that a Viṣṇu shrine was constructed within the *prākāra* of the Viśvanātha temple.

There exists, therefore, a temple with unusually precise data regarding all phases of its construction.

NOTES

1. *Travancore Archaeological Series*, Vol. I, No. IV, p. 99.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 97, verse 12.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 97, verse 7
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, No. V, p. 103.
6. *S.I.I.*, Vol. V, p. 762.
7. *Ibid.*

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Inscriptions of the Hyderabad-Karnataka and Telangana Regions and Their Bearing on Art History

MADHAV N. KATTI

THIS PAPER will consider inscriptions discovered in the Hyderabad-Karnataka and Telangana regions which comprised the districts of the former Hyderabad state, where Kannaḍa and Telugu were predominant.[1] After the reorganization of States, the two regions have become a part of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh respectively.

Though inscriptions discovered in these areas run into hundreds, those furnishing helpful information about the types of temples or other architectural forms, sculptures or iconography are comparatively few. Of course, names of persons responsible for patronage of buildings are found in almost every inscription, but the names of architects or sculptors occur less frequently, a fact paralleled in other parts of the country also. A study of inscriptions in the two regions would show that Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Jainism[2] had much impact in this part of the country. Many inscriptions also furnish information about the images under worship and quite a few of these are of significance to iconographical studies.

The earliest of the epigraphs covered in this paper is from Tummalaguḍem (Nalgoṇḍa District) belonging to the region of the Viṣṇukuṇḍī Govindavarmā (408–45 A.D.), while the latest is from Peṇṭlavalli (Mahboobnagar District) belonging to the eighteenth century. Inside this span of centuries the area came under the rule of the Calukyas of Vātāpi, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Cāḷukyas of Kalyāṇa, Eastern Cāḷukyas of Vēṅgi, Kaḷacurya, Yādavas (or Sēuṇa), Kākatīyas, and Vijayanagar and Marāṭhā families and the feudatories of all these dynasties. The impact of various Muslim rulers in the late medieval period is also noticeable in the culture of the two regions.[3]

I. INSCRIPTIONS OF THE HYDERABAD-KARNATAKA REGION

An inscription[4] engraved on a panel today found in the Kālī-Masjid in Raichūr is in kannaḍa language and characters of the ninth century. It mentions Biyaḷīśvara and seems to refer to the construction of a wall (*bhitti*) and *śukanāsi (Biyaḷēśvarada ... śukanāsi ... bhittiya mādisi ...)*. Since the Kālī-masjid was originally a temple, or part of one, the inscription likely refers to that structure. It is worth examining further as it appears to have been one of the early temples constructed during the reign of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Biyaḷīśvara must be the deity Śiva named after the person (whose name may have been Biyaḷa) responsible for the construction of the temple.

Another inscription from Raichur District[5] (findspot Mādinūr, Koppal Taluk), belonging to the reign of Cāḷukya Taila II, states that in the first year of his reign (973 A.D.) the emperor performed *Brahmāṇḍakratu* and set up a Traipuruṣa temple, the deities being Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya, and bestowed the village Modeyanūru (*alias* Moditagrāma) for the daily worship and offerings in the temple and for its repairs. It also contains the praise of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya. There is further epigraphical evidence to show that the temple

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was renovated during the reign of Bhūlokamalla (Somesvara III) in the year 1136 A.D. As the emperor also makes further grants to the temple on that occasion, it is clear that the renovation was over before the date (December 10) of the record.

An inscription from Kukkanūr[6] (Yalburga Taluk, Raichur District) belonging to the reign of Iṛivabedaṅga Satyāśraya of the Cāḷukya dynasty and dated Śaka 927/1005 A.D. states that Iśvaraseṭṭi having had the two pinnacles (*kaḷaśa*) of the temples set up, constructed a front hall (*mukha-sāle*) and made some gifts for the maintenance of the *maṇḍapa* of the temple. This inscription reflects the part played by common people in the temple-building activities. The relevant portion of the text of the record reads:

> Īśvaraseṭṭi eraḍu degulada kaḷaśaman=idisi mukha-sālevaṁ sameyisi, devaraṁ pradakṣiṇe geydu ... dhārāpūrvakadiṁda maṇṭapada parisūtrad=upabhōgakke go(ko)ṭṭa gadyāṇamuṁ.

Though the editor of the record does not specify where the two pinnacles were set up, they were apparently built on two separate shrines. As Iśvaraseṭṭi is stated to have gone round the deity (and not the temple), the main shrine must have had a *pradakṣiṇāpatha*. The temple originally must have had at least two shrines: the main shrine with a circumambulatory passage and *maṇḍapa* to which a *mukhamaṇḍapa* was added.

An epigraph engraved on a slab kept outside the Mallikārjuna temple at Nippāṇi[7] (Chitapur Taluk, Gulbarga District), belonging to the reign of Cāḷukya Jagadekamalla and dated Śaka 960/1038 A.D., records the installation of the image of goddess Sarasvatī at Sūpāṇi (*mod.* Nippaṇi) and a grant of land made by Somaladevi, his consort, governing Alande-1000. It is further stated in the epigraph that the grant was meant for the maintenance of the students and teachers besides the worship of the goddess. The record also states that the deity was installed in the *Sarasvatī-maṇḍapa* which was caused to be built by Durgasiṁha, the *manevergaḍe* of the queen. From this it can be imagined that the *Sarasvatī-maṇḍapa* served the purpose of a college (*ghaṭikā*) and a library attached to the temple of Mallikārjuna where the record is presently found. It is possible that a building enshrining the image of Sarasvatī was attached to the *maṇḍapa*.

An inscription from Harsur[8] (Gulbarga Taluk and District) belonging to the reign of Vikramāditya VI and dated in his regnal year 21 (1097 A.D.) records the renovation of the temple of Bāleśvara (originally built by Bāḷisetti) by Bhāskaraseṭṭi and the completion of the temple of Kedāreśvara (originally started by Ketiseṭṭi) by Sāgaraseṭṭi, in the *sarvanamasyaagrahāra*, Sāḷeyasīmala situated in Goṅka-nāḍu, a sub-division of Alande-1000 in Kuntala-janapada. The *agrahāra* Sāḷeyasīmala must be the place around the modern Harsūr, the findspot of the record. It is possible that there were a number of temples in the place and it must have been a centre of educational activities.[9]

A record from Navali[10] (Lingsugur Taluk, Raichur District) engraved on a slab set up in the Jaṭāśaṅkara temple refers to the reign of Cāḷukya Tribhuvanamalla (Vikramāditya VI). It is dated in his regnal year 44, 1119 A.D., and states that Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Bhūtarasa of the Kadamba family installed the god Traipuruṣadeva on the bank of Kṛṣṇā and a golden pinnacle (*kaḷaśa*) on the temple of Svayaṁbhu Jadeyaśaṅkaradēva (*Svayaṁbu* Jadeya-*Śaṅkaradēvara niketanakke suvarṇa kaḷaśaman=ettisi ādevasa Kṛṣṇā-nadiya taḍiyalu Traipuruṣadevara pratiṣṭheyannu mādi* ... . By this it is clear that the construction of the temple was completed earlier than the record's date, when the deity was installed and the golden pinnacle set up on the temple of Jadeya-Śaṅkaradeva, whose construction was also completed by that time.

Another record, engraved on the same slab, belongs to the reign of his successor Bhūlokamalla (Someśvara III) and is dated in his 10th regnal year, 1135 A.D. It refers to the installation of the deity Jalaśayana (which presupposes construction of a shrine for the deity) near the Traipurusa temple to which also the earlier grant was renewed by *Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara* Mādhavattiyarasa, son of Bhūtarasa, who is also stated to have made grants to a *sāle* (school ?) and a *satra* at Jevur and to the *brāhmaṇas* and *niviṣṭas* of the temple. The term *niviṣṭa* seems to mean care-takers of the temple (evidently of Traīpuruṣa).

An epigraph from Syed-Ciṅcoḷi[12] (Gulbaraga Taluk and District) belonging to the reign of the same ruler, and dated in his 46th regnal year (1122 A.D.), records gifts of land for worship, repairs in the temples of Nāraṇeśvara, Keśava and Kamalagarbha at Ciṁcavaḷḷi, for feeding the ascetics, to the *satra* and the *purāṇada-khaṇḍikā*. It was provided jointly by *Mahāpradhāna Bhīvaṇayya-daṇḍanāyaka, mahā-*

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maṇḍaleśvara manneya Goṅkarasa and Nāraṇayya-daṇḍanāyaka, the *prabhu* of Cinnavalli. The temples of the deities mentioned above, which represent two aspects of Viṣṇu and the Śiva temple named after Nāraṇayya-daṇḍanāyaka (namely Nāraṇeśvara) may have together formed a bigger (temple) complex; the *purāṇada-khaṇḍikā* must have been attached to this institution.

From Śirhalli (Chincholi Taluk, Gulbarga District) is an inscription engraved on a slab kept in the Nāgalinga temple; this inscription is dated to the fourth regnal year of Cālukya Taila III (1153 A.D.).[13] It refers to the construction by *daṇḍanāyaka* Vimalāditya and his brother Candrāditya of three temples for Harihara (*Harihara-bhavana-trayamaṁ nirmisidaru*) together with the *prākāra*, which is referred to as *vajra-ghaṭita*, in the *agrahāra* Sirivalli. The two brothers are also credited to have constructed a tank. The inscription refers to the installation of Kamalāvallabha (i.e. Viṣnu) by Vimalāditya (*Kamalāvallabhanaṁ pratiṣṭhisi jagadvikhyātan=āgildapaṁ Vimalādityan=udātta-nitya-vibhayaṁ candrārkkar=ull=annegaṁ*). The mention of three shrines (*bhavana-traya*) for Harihara and references to the deities Kamalāvallabha and Keśavasvāmī and Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa indicate that the deity mentioned as Harihara does not symbolise the Hari and Hara aspects in one form, but in separate forms of the deities Hari (connoted by Kamalāvallabha and Keśavasvāmī) and Hara (Śiva). Although Śiva is not specifically mentioned by the record, the deity is suggested by the word Śaṅkara in *Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa*. Therefore there were two shrines for Viṣnu and one for Śiva, all situated within one *prākāra*.

A slab set up in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Mahāmāyā temple at Kukkanūr (Yalburgā Taluk, Raichur District) bears an inscription which refers itself to the reign of Kalacurya Saṅkamadeva[14] and is dated Śaka 1100/1178 A.D. The record states that Kukkanūr was a purified village due to the presence of Puraṇadevī, Cāmuṇḍādevī, Mahāmāye, Tadagadambike, Vasantādevī, Gupta-cāmuṇḍī, and Jyeṣṭhādevī as the eldest of these deities also established herself there (*A deviyarkalolu mahimōdayadiṁ piriyalārgavenippolviṁ (olpiṁ) jyeṣṭhādēviy=enisutuṁ Jyeṣṭhādēvī tad-agrahāradol nelegondalu*). To the east of the temple of Jyesthadevi was Brahmeśvara, according to the inscription; to the south was Ganeśvara; to the west Mūleśvara; and to the north was Svayaṁbhu Mallikārjuna. In addition to the temples of these deities there was a temple of Bhairava.

The above-noted references indicate that the goddess Jyeṣṭhā mentioned in the record was here viewed as a form of the Śakti of Śiva, not the elder sister of Lakṣmī as known through the Purāṇas. Though the record does not clearly mention whether the other deities had separate shrines, the context indicates the presence of a separate shrine for each. A copper plate charter from Itgi[15] (Yalburga Taluk, Raichur District) dated 1183 A.D. refers to Kukkanūr as a most sacred place, the abode of goddess Jyeṣṭhādevī.

On an image in front of the railway station at Citāpur[16] (Chitapur Tāluk, Gulbargā District), is an epigraph in characters of the twelfth century. It states that Prabhu Ravidevarasa and three other persons caused repairs to the *Ghāṭāntakiyā basti* of Mūlasangha, which had fallen into disrepair due to the lapse of time; they installed the image of Ādibhaṭṭāraka and also set up the pinnacle (*kalaśa*) over the *basadi*. The record states: "*Ghaṭāntakiya basadi*[17]. *Kālakramadiṁ sthānaśūnyam=agildudaṁ kaṇḍ=alliya prabhu Ravidevarasanuṁ ... intī nālvaru basadiyaṁ mādisi śrīy-Ādibhaṭārakadēvara pratimeyaṁ mādisi" pratiṣṭheyaṁ mādi kalaś-ārōhaṇaṁ mādida ...*). Though we do not find the description of the image in the report, it is obvious that the image on which the inscription is engraved is that of Ādibhaṭṭāraka. Unfortunately, the *basadi* has fallen into disrepair again.

A record from Hagarilage[18] (Shorapur Taluk, Gulbarga District) found on a loose slab lying near the Dyāmavvana kaṭṭi belongs to the rule of Kalacurya-Cakravarti Rāyanārāyaṇa Sa[ṅkama] and is written in characters of the twelfth century. It refers to a grant of land for the worship of Trikūṭeśvara. As the record is damaged, details regarding the temple, if given, are lost.

II. INSCRIPTIONS OF THE TELANGANA REGION

From this region, the earliest inscription is a copper-plate charter from Tummalagaḍem[19] (Ramannapet Taluk, Nalgonda District) dated to the 37th regnal year of Viṣnukuṇḍī Govindavarmā (445–46 A.D.). It registers a gift of the village Peṅkapura for the maintenance and repairs of the *vihāra*. The *vihāra* is stated to have been constructed by his queen, Paramamahādevī, for the benefit of the *Caturdiś=ārya-*

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bhikṣu-saṅgha. The king is also stated to have constructed a number of temples and *vihāras*.

An inscription in Sanskrit from Alampūr[20] (Ālampur Tāluk, Mahboobnagar District) belonging to the reign of Calukya Vikramāditya I of Vātāpī is written in Telugu-Kannaḍa characters of the seventh century. It refers to the installation of a *liṅga* in the temple of Mahādeva by the ruler and records a gift of land to the *mahā-brāhmaṇa* Piṣṭiśarmā. This record furnishes the earliest date for the group of temples known as Navaliṅgeśvara. As the inscription is found on a pillar in the *maṇḍapa* of Arkabrahmā temple, the *liṅga* was likely installed in this very temple.

Another inscription engraved on a slab preserved in the local museum at the same place[21] is written in Kannaḍa language and characters of the ninth century A.D. and belongs to the reign of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda III. It seems to record the construction of a shrine for Āditya in the Uttareśvara temple by Śrīmāra, son of Sāṭiyabbe. The name Uttareśvara is rare. We have a temple by the same name at Taṁbūru,[22] (Dhārwār District), which is alternately referred to as Uttarakumārana *guḍi* (with reference to Uttarakumāra, the Mahābhārata personage).

An inscription from Kurikyāl[23] (Karīmnagar Taluk and District) was caused to be engraved on a rock by Jina Vallabha, the younger brother of the famous Kannaḍa poet Paṁpa. It is in Telugu-Kannaḍa characters of the tenth century and belongs to the reign of Arikesarī II of the dynasty of the Cāḷukya of Vēmulavāḍa. The carving of sculptures of two "Ādyanta-Jinas" is recorded in the inscription. The rock on which they are carved is referred to as Siddhasile (*Siddha-śilā*). Vallabha is also stated to have caused the construction of a *basadi* named Tribhuvanatilaka,[24] a tank named Kavitāguṇārna and a garden called Madanaviḷāsa. It is also stated that the hillock Vṛṣabhagiri was embellished with the Vṛṣabheśvarabiṁba on its southern part.

On a rock-cut temple of Śiva at Aḍavisomanapalle[25] (Manthani Taluk, Karīmnagar District), is an inscription in characters of the eleventh century recording an endowment to god Rāmeśvara. On the side-wall of the temple are engraved the letters *Ya (jā)na* and a curved line by their side, measuring a span in length, which the sculptors and architects of the cave must have used.

An inscription engraved on a slab by the roadsides near a Śiva temple at Pūḍūr[26] (Gadwal Taluk, Mahboobnagar District) is in characters of the twelfth century and assignable to the reign of Cāḷukya Tribhuvanamalla (Vikramāditya VI). It refers to the Pallava-*Jinālaya* caused to be built by *Mahāmaṇḍaleśvara* Pallavarasa (also mentioned as Hallavarasa) of Pūṇḍūr. The *Jinālaya*, also referred to as *Tāraganāḍhi-paprabha-Jinālaya* (i.e. Chandraprabha *Jinālaya*), is stated to be of the Sarvatobhadra type with five *śālās* (verse 11) and compared to Surendra-vimāna, Phanindravimāna and Amarādri. The record calls donor *āgama-pravīṇa* (well-versed in *āgmas*) explaining his interest in building a magnificent *Jinālaya*. The verse (No. 11, lines 52 to 55) referring to its architectural form reads:

> Līleyin=esev=ekāla-dviśāla-triśāla-catuśśāla-paṁcaśālam mel=enisitt=allim̐ mele Pallavana Jinālayam̐ Sarvatobhadra diṁdam̐||

The Pallava-*Jinālaya*, embellished with one, two, three, four and five *śālās* and (much more than this) was of the *sarvato bhadra* type. P.K. Acharya refers to *sarvatobhadra* as one of the eight classes of villages, a quadrangular type of building and a five storeyed building.[27] A *śālā* has all the attributes of the main edifice. According to the Kāmikāgama:[28]

> Adhiṣṭhānam̐ ca pādam̐ ca prastaram karanam̐= eva ca|
> śikharam stūpikā caiva śālāṅgam=iti kathyate||

A *sarvatobhadra* structure should have four entrances (*dvāraiḥ caturbhiḥ api*).[29] "An edifice with uninterrupted terraces on every side is termed as *sarvatobhadra* (i.e. godly on every side), such one is fit for kings, gods and ought to have four entrances" (according to the *Bṛhat-saṁhitā*).[30] Also there, it is referred to as a "Kind of building, which has four entrances, many spires and turrets (*śikharas*), many beautiful dormer windows and five storys and is 26 cubits broad".[31]

The Pallava-*Jinālaya* must have had at least five storys with a number of smaller turrets, while the *garbhagṛha* and all the *śālās* must have had their own *śikharas*. If we imagine that the first story (*tala*) of this *Jinālaya* had five *śālās* (part of *hāra* in the Dravidian idiom), the second four, the third three, the fourth two and the fifth one *śālā* (and then *grīvā*, *śikhara* and *stūpī*), while counting from the top downwards, we encounter *ekaśāla*, *dviśāla*, *tri-śāla*, *catuś-śāla* and *pañca-śāla*. It must have had all the attributes of a Sarvatobhadra-type temple, fulfilling the specifications of different *āgamas*, significant if we remember

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that Pallavarasa, the builder of the *basadi*, was an *āgama-pravīṇa*.

The *Jinālaya* was built to the west of the village (*paścimabhāgadalli*). It is possible that the capital itself was of the *Sarvatobhadra* type. It is unfortunate that except for some ruins here and there, not much is presently left in the village. However, a thorough examination of the ruins may help us reconstruct the glory of the township and the *Jinālaya*.

An inscription from Anmakoṇḍa[32] (Warangal Taluk and District) belonging to the 42nd regnal year of Cāḷukya Vikramāditya VI (1117 A.D.) refers to Kākatīya Prola as his feudatory. The temple in which the epigraph is found is perhaps the earliest Kākatīya temple, the Jaina deity being Padmākṣī (Padmāvatī) but presently worshipped as goddess Durgā.

An inscription from Pillalamarri[33] (Suryapet Taluk, Nalgonda District) dated Śaka 1117/1195 A.D. states that Nāma established a triple shrine, i.e. Trikūṭa, for Kāmeśvara, Kāceśvara and Nāmeśvara. The temples shine, says the inscription, with whiteness (white plaster or color of stone) as if they symbolise the virtues of the people there.

An epigraph[34] from Inugarti (Mahboobabad Tāluk, Waraṅgal District) belonging to the reign of Kākatīya Gaṇapati and dated to Śaka 1143/1221 A.D. states that Kākati Mailamāmbā, known as Dharmakīrti, built a *prāsāda* temple to Śiva. She further decorated it with stone sculptures, pinnacled it with seven golden *kalaśas* and set up an image of Bhairava at its gate (*dvāra*). She is also stated to have caused the construction of a well (*vāpi*) with descending steps and to have been responsible for causing the construction of a temple of Gopālakṛṣṇa with a *maṇḍa*, decorating it with figures of musicians and dancers. Another record from the same place[35] refers to Mailamāmbā as having installed the deity Jalandhareśvara and Bhairava in a cavern in Guṇṭiceruvu. The name *Jalandhareśvara* and the fact that it was installed in a cavern suggest that there may have been a water-spring nearby from which drops automatically fell over the *liṅga*.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that epigraphs add to our knowledge of the architectural, sculptural and iconographical history of the two regions, covering a period of about one and half thousand years, from the 5th century onwards. Inscriptions of the area furnish details, though not always exhaustive, which help constructing the history of art and architecture of the two regions.

It is worth remembering here that a number of Brahmanical rulers took direct interest in the construction, renovation, extension and consecration of the edifices not only of the deities of the Brahmanical pantheons but also of those of the Jaina and Buddhist religions. Even the Muslim rulers, who were in charge of the administration of these areas, honoured the sentiments of their subjects, renovated a number of temples and thus became instrumental in preserving and enriching our cultural heritage.

Among the classes of temples which we come across in the inscriptions examined, the Traipuruṣa[36] and Trikūṭa[37] temples deserve a special mention here. Traipuruṣa temples necessarily connote the trinity. As separate worship of Brahmā was forbidden, we have a temple (at Madinur Raichur District) for the deities Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya[38] (the last mentioned instead of Brahmā) and a temple for Viṣṇu, Śiva and Kamalagarbha (in the temple complex at Syed Cincoli, Gulbarga District).[39] In other cases, inscriptions only mention the Traipuruṣa temples without specifying the deities therein. We do not know if all the aspects of the three deities were portrayed in a single image in any temple.[40]

The Trikūṭa temples were built for Śiva, represented by three *liṅgas*, and addressed in some epigraphs by three different names. We have examples of the temples which had three separate shrines (as at Pillalamarri and Nāgulapāḍu, both in Nalgonda District)[41] for the three *liṅgas* and of those which housed the three *liṅgas* in one shrine (as probably in Hagariṭage).[42] We have also an interesting example of a temple of Harihara or Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa (at Śirhalli, Gulbarga District)[43] with three shrines, one for Śiva and two for forms of Viṣṇu, namely Kamalāvallabha and Keśavasvāmī. The Kukkanūr inscription[44] has brought to light the existence of a magnificent temple for jyeṣṭhā referred to as Kālikā-Jēṣṭhe, the senior-most of all the goddesses (*jeṣṭhe*) dwelling there. The goddess was a form of the Śakti of Śiva.

NOTES

1. The Hyderabad-Karnataka region comprised Raichur. Gulbarga and Bidar Districts, while the Telangana region comprised Hyderābād, Mahboobnagar, Medak, Nalgonda, Warangal, Nizamabad,

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Karīmnagar, Adilabad and Vikarabad Districts.

2. Temples of Visnu, Śiva and Jina are found in a large number in these regions, which is also the pattern in the adjoining provinces, especially Karnataka.

3. While several Islamic monuments were built during the regime of the Muslim rulers, some of the rulers also showed interest in renovating the Brahmanical temples. In these areas, the British had less impact as compared to the Muslim rulers, as even upto 1947 the provincial ruler was the Nizam of Hyderābād.

4. D.C. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE* for 1957–58, Calcutta 1963. App. B. No. 387. The inscription is fragmentary.

5. P.B. Desai (Ed.), *Hyderabad Archaeological Series*, No. 18, Hyderabad 1958, Ins. No. 11.

6. *Ibid.*, No. 18. Ins. No. 1.

7. Gai (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1962–63, Delhi 1966, App. B. No. 779.

8. Gai (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1962–63, App. B. No. 785.

9. We also have instances like Sālotagi in Bījapur District (*vide*, S. Gururajachar. "A Note on Some Place Names," Madhav N. Katti (Ed.), *Studies in Indian Place Names*, 'Vol. I. Mysore 1979, pp. 88–89). The name of the *agrahāra Saleyasīmhala* has to be derived from *Sāle* in (i.e. *śāle*) and *Sīmala* (probably from Sīmā). Sāle in common parlance also means a school, an educational institution, etc.

10. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1958–59, App. B, No. 711.

11. *Ibid.* No. 712.

12. Gai (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1961–62, App. B, No. 526.

13. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1958–59, App. B. No. 640.

14. Desai (Ed.), *Hyderabad.*, No. 18, Ins. No. 13.

15. *Ibid.*, No. 18. Ins. No. 14.

16. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, 1959–60, Delhi 1963. App. B. No. 428.

17. There also was a Ghatāntākīya-*basadi* at Morab, Dhārwār District (vide, Desai, *Jainism in South India*, Sholapur 1957, p. 143.)

18. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, 1959–60. App. B. No. 472.

19. N. Venkataramanayya, *Report on Epigraphy* (Andhra Pradesh Government) for 1966, Hyderabad 1966. App. A. No. 1.

20. P.R. Srinivasan (Ed.), *ARIE.*, 1976–77, App. B, No. 20. (Not yet published.)

21. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1959–60, App. B, No. 110.

22. Gai (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1965–66, Delhi 1970, App. B, No. 428. The temple is known both as Uttareśvara-gudi and Uttarakumārana-gudi, the latter name being popular. This was observed by me when I inspected the temple in 1965–66 to copy inscriptions from Tambūru.

23. A.M. Annigeri and R. Seshashastri (Ed.), *Śāsana Saṁgraha* (Kannada), Bangalore 1975, No. 9, pp. 11–13.

24. For detailed discussion on Tribhuvanatilaka, *vide* Desai, *Jainism.*, pp. 106–07.

25. Sircar (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1958–59, App. B, No. 87.

26. Gai (Ed.), *ARIE.*, for 1965–66, App. B, No. 29.

27. P.K. Acharya, *Indian Architecture according to Mānasāra-Śilpa Sāstra*, Allahabad 1927, p. 254.

28. Acharya, *A Dictionary of Hindu Architecture*, Allahabad 1927, p. 581. The end of the first line is metrically defective. After *okaraṇam*, the intended word is probably *tathā* or *ca vei*.

29. Acharya, *A Dictionary*, p. 624, *Cf.* K.V. Ramesh, "The Jaina Art and Architecture of Tulunādu," *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, Ahmedabad 1975, pp. 118–22.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. H. Krishna Shastri, "Anmakonda Inscription of Prōla. " *EI,* Vol. IX, Calcutta 1908, pp. 256–67 and Plates.

33. P. Srinivasachar (Ed.), *Hyderabad.*, No. 13, Ins. No. 38, pp. 110–13.

34. Venkataramanayya (Ed.), *Report.*, for 1965, Hyderabad 1968, App. B, No. 356.

35. *Ibid.*, No. 360.

36. *Vide* notes 5, 10, 11 and 12.

37. *Vide* notes 18 and 33.

38. *Vide* note 5.

39. *Vide* note 12.

40. For instance, the deity like the Dattātreya has the attributes of the three deities; it is not known if he represented Traipurusa in the above sense.

41. *Vide* note 33.

42. *Vide* note 18. We have the well-known example of a Trikueteśvara temple housing three *liṅgas* in a single shrine at Gadag (Dharwar District). Krish-

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nan's query about whether the Āndhra area had Trikūṭa temples is answered by the above-cited examples. Even there were Jain *basadis* of the Trikūṭa type in Karṇāṭaka: *vide* Katti, "Epigraphical Evidences in Karnataka About the Protection of Monuments," *The Karnatak Historical Review*, Vol. XIV, No. 2, Dharwar 1979, pp. 26–32.

43. *Vide* note 13.
44. *Vide* note 14.

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45

Sri Lanka Epigraphy: Its Bearing on Art History

SADDHAMANGALA KARUNARATNE

SRI LANKA EPIGRAPHY dates back to the pre-Christian era, for some of the records that have survived are as old as the third or the second century B.C. The art of inscribing on stone has continued to the modern era, perpetuated with zeal and vigor. The epigraphs that belong to the ancient period number over three thousand, but, unfortunately, those that can be serviceable to art history are extremely few in number.

In the wake of the Aryan-speaking civilization from the subcontinent of India to the island of Sri Lanka, art in all its forms also arrived. The art forms that were planted in the soil of Sri Lanka were nurtured by Buddhism and in course of time bore fruit preserving a distinct character.

Buddhism introduced to Sri Lanka by Mahinda Thera (Sthavira Mahendra), the son of Emperor Aśoka, supported the growth and sustenance of all arts in Sri Lanka. At first, Buddhist monks used caves as their dwellings, and stone-cutters were employed to incise drip-ledges and to dress the stone. The donative inscriptions that run by the drip-ledges contain numerous reference to stone-cutters.

The caves, distributed over all the areas populated by the Aryan immigrants, clearly manifest the standard of proficiency local artisans had attained in preparing natural cairns for monks. Their walls were decorated with murals executed over a thin coating of plaster. In the Brāhmī inscriptions, there are a few references to painters, who were known as *citakāra* (Sanskrit *citrakāra*). The caves were provided with walls to keep off the heavy rains and winds. For building walls, there were architects and masons who are mentioned in the inscriptions as *vaḍaka* and *uluvaḍu*.

At Cittalapabbata, an important center in the southern region of Sri Lanka, a cave carries the inscription, *Vaḍaka-śoṇasa lene śagaśa*, the cave (*lene*, Sanskrit *layaṇa*) of Sona, the architect (dedicated) to the Saṅgha.

Another cave displays an inscription which reads, *Bata-Vasaha Vaḍaka-suvatiya lene*, the cave of Lord Vamsa and of the architect Suvati (Skt. Suvrati).

Amidst the ruins are inscribed bricks, that have been donated to religious establishments. Such bricks afford valuable architectural evidence of twofold value. First, the palaeographical data throws light on the date of the building—the original construction or its subsequent restorations. Second, they identify the parties responsible for putting up the structure and that evidence is important in corroborating or contradicting the statements in the ancient chronicles such as the *Dipavaṁsa*, the *Mahāvaṁsa* and the *Buddhavaṁsa*.

The *dagaba*, independent of its prototype in India, followed a developement of its own in Sri Lanka. Some of the ancient *stūpas* are faced with dressed slabs of stone, a type of *stūpa* referred to as *sila tuba* (Sanskrit *śila-stupa*) in the inscriptions. An inscription found recently in a remote village in the North Central Province carries the word *sila tuba:*

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Si-Gamini aba rajaha mata Bujiha Pakamitabi tumaha karita Nava viherahi-
Sila tubahi Diga abahagama vavi dina.

The tank (*vavi*, Skt. *vāpī*), situated in the village Digaabaha was offered to the stone *stūpa* of the New Monastery, built by the wife named Pakamitta, the wife of Buji, the minister of king Gamini Abhaya (i.e. Amanda Gamini Abhaya: 22-31 A.D.).

Inscriptional evidence throws light on the adjuncts of a *stūpa*. The Yangala Rock Inscription bears reference to a frontispiece of a *stūpa:*

1. Sidam-Buta-Vijaya Datayaha agiya
2. Karivita

This *agiya* (frontispiece) has been caused to be constructed by Buddha Vijaya Dattaka.

Today there are no examples of *agiyas*, for their place seems to have been acquired by *vahalkadas*.

The growth of a *stūpa* and of its precincts can also be studied by information gleaned from inscriptions. For example, the Kataragama slab inscription records the enlargement of the *cetiya* and the laying of steps at the four entrances of the courtyard.

In the lithic records, references to different parts of a *stūpa* indicate the high level of constructing *dagabas*. That view is substantiated by archaeological evidence. For example, this is shown by an inscription datable to the second century A.D. at Kossavakanda (Plate 238), in the vicinity of Anurādhāpura. It opens with the benedictory word Sidha and then reads:

1. Kudaganaka Vateya tumaha Giravi Sihearahi Akadavavikahi (da)ka(pati)
2. Jalakataka-veharahi tubhi tumaha karita ceta hi ca
3. Muda-vet(i)kaha ca bada-vitikaha ca tumaha karita
4. B(o) tigehehi ca panamadakahi ca tumaha kari (ta)
5. Bojana-ha (La) hi ca Jina-padisatiriya kotu dini
6. Biku-sa (gaha) habapa

Success! Kudaganaka Vateya granted to the monastery of Jalukataka (Jalukataka-vihāra), the water-revenue from the tank (*vavi*, i.e. *vāpī*) Akada in Giravi Siheara, for the purpose of undertaking repairs at the *caitya* (which was) caused to be built by him, at the railing on the summit (*muda-vetikaha* i.e. *muda-vedikā* i.e. *harmikā*) of the *stūpa*, and at the railing at the dome *bada-vitika*, i.e. *vṛtta-vedikā*, and in the Bodhi shrine caused to be built by him and in the water-pavilion and in the dining hall built by him . . .to the community of monks . . .

One does not come across such terms as *muda-vetikaha* and *bada-vitikaha* in literature, so from this inscription an insight is gained into the evolution of the *stūpa*.

A monastery had various buildings which carried appellations to distinguish their purpose. Even monuments such as *stūpas* or Bodhi trees had names to describe the adjunct structures. For example, two inscriptions from Lihinimalai (Plate 239) carry architectural designations of buildings in a monastery.

The first inscription reads:

1. Sidam Mala-tisa-maharaji Naka-Mulayaha
2. Huvahaka bujana kalahi ratiya h o na-
3. (Ya de) vaya karavi Kadara-maraya arada vavi ganavaya
4. (Na) va- (ga) ma kotu daka-patiya kara kadaya si-pa-
5. Vata-veherahi Bota-gehi dini mahapakavata-
6. Hi ca dini niyadaya

Success! The great king Kanittha Tissa [226-244 A.D.] having caused to be acquired in perpetuity, the tank (named) Kadara-maraya, constructed by Devaya the *ratthika*, in the time when Naka Mulaya was administering the *huvauka* (province), formed a new village, gave the water-revenue (thereof), having remitted the taxes (to which it is liable) to the Bodhi-house of the Sipavata monastery; it was also granted as a fixed donation to the great refectory.

The second inscription reads:

1. Si Mala-Tisa-maharaji me P(O)hota-gara Karaya
2. (Giri)Gama-vavi ca Mala-ketaka ca Curaviya ca me Tini Ta-
3. Nahi do-patiya kara dadaya dini Sipavata-viharahi
4. Bikusagahata mahapaka-vatahi dini

Success! The great king Kanittha Tissa caused this Uposatha-house to be built, and granted the two categories of revenue, having remitted the taxes (thereon) of these three lands, namely, the tank of (Giri) gama, the tract of fields named Malaketake and (the tank) Coraviya, to the great refectory,

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for the benefit of the community of *bhikkhus* in the monastery of Sipavata.

Some of the architectural terms met with in the inscriptions are not found in literature, so the inscriptional evidence is of singular importance in identifying the buildings. Among these are *botagehi, mahapakavaṭa* and *pohotagara*. Here *pohotagara* refers to the building in which monks gather on Uposatha days to perform acts of the Vinaya. This is a building whose boundaries are demarcated by the congregation and which cannot be trespassed by others. *Mahapakavaṭa* refers to a refectory hall. Alma-halls are designated by several terms as *bojanahala, paka, pakavata, mahapakavata* and *mahēpāli*. Probably in the halls referred to as *pakavata* there were kitchens to cook the *dāna* for the *saṁgha*.

Among artists mentioned in inscriptions are goldsmiths, designated by the term *tuladara* (Sanskrit *tulādhara*) or Taladara, denoting a holder of the scales. An inscription from Maudagala in the Hambantota District refers to goldsmiths: *Anurada Teraha ca Tuladara Puta Sumanaha ca Manapadasane*. (The cave named Manopadassana of the elder Anuradha and of the goldsmith Sumana.) *Tabakara* in epigraphs refers to coppersmiths (*tabakara* i.e. *tāmrakāra*), for example in an inscription from Periya-Puliyankulama in the Vavuniya District: *Tabakara-Tisa-Puta-Ronigutasa Lene*. (The cave of Rohunugutta [Sanskrit Rohaṇagupta], son of Tissa [Sanskrit Tiṣya], the coppersmith.) Ivory carvers are called *daṭika*, derived from Pali *dāṭhika*, for example at the Vegiri Devala in Kandy: *Daṭika Sumanasa* (of the ivory-worker Sumana).

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46

Islamic Inscriptions: Their Bearing on Monuments

Z.A. DESAI

I

INDIAN ISLAMIC inscriptions, as a rule, date from the last decade of the twelfth century[1] and later, with the exception of about a dozen earlier ones found in Haryana (at Sonepat[2] in Rohtak District and at Narnaul[3] in Mahendargarh District) and Gujarat (at Bhadreshwar[4] in Kutch District). In the eastern part of the country, the earliest inscription so far known belongs to the first quarter of the thirteenth century,[5] while in the south, Islamic inscriptions appear at a still later date, almost synchronizing with the Khaljī conquest of the Deccan about three quarters of a century later.[6] Indeed, much earlier records have been reported in traditional accounts from the western and southern coastal regions, but none actually has been found.

These inscriptions are usually connected with sectarian buildings such as mosques and tombs or with secular edifices such as forts, palaces, gateways, tanks, wells, step-wells, gardens, caravansarais, and collegiate buildings. Certain movable objects such as arms, seals and signets, vases, utensils, and precious stones also, in some cases, bear inscriptions.

The primary importance of these epigraphs lies in their value as the source for discerning facets of history, including cultural. By far the largest number of inscriptions was intended to commemorate the construction of monuments and give matter-of-fact information about the building, e.g., its nature, the date of construction, the name of the builder, and, in quite a few cases, the political or social status of the builder, the names of the local and the provincial officials and/or the reigning monarch. Unfortunately, they do not contain detailed or additional, even extraneous, information on these points as is generally met with in other Indian inscriptions.

Hence, unlike other Indian inscriptions, the historical importance of Islamic epigraphs is somewhat restricted. But at the same time, they constitute the most primary and the only strictly contemporary source for the exact dates of the foundations of monuments and provide a much-needed sheet-anchor for chronology.

True, a well-developed discipline of art history can help solve some of the problems of identification, authorship and dating with the help of formal and stylistic analysis of the material when the epigraphical data are problematic or the context is confusing. But the art historian has to have epigraphical and literary data to avoid errors in chronology.

II

Indo-Islamic monumental inscriptions are almost entirely foundational, having in the main bearing on the date of the monument. Again, in the Islamic context, a few inscriptions which may in a way be termed "referrent" are also basically foundational and refer only to the earlier construction of the same monu-

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ment. Likewise, epigraphic records occurring on monuments which do not directly refer to their construction, may perhaps be deemed "referrent" as indicating, indirectly of course, the probable time of construction. The only "referrent" inscription, which may be termed so, is the one believed to have been engraved by Fīrūz Tughluq (1351–88) at the base of the dome in his Fīrūz Shāh Koṭlā mosque at Delhi; the inscription has long since disappeared; but the eye-reading of it is available in manuscript and print.[7] In this epigraph, the Tughluq ruler describes his achievements, particularly in the matter of restoration and reparation of earlier monuments in Delhi.

III

Islamic inscriptions have thus an immense bearing on monuments. This is, in the main, three-fold: origin and history of a monument, its identification, and its art. They provide the earliest precise date of the construction of the monuments and also, in some cases, the date(s) of subsequent extension(s), addition(s) and repairs they might have undergone. In most parts of India, the study of Islamic architectural styles posed a great challenge in that unlike the temple or any other form of non-Islamic architecture, they did not have roots here. The architecture does not represent the manifestation or systematic growth of a single style in its original socio-religious environment. Rather, the new concept that was to take a concrete shape here, was by this time more or less homogeneous and well-knit, having already developed out of well-formed and well-defined multi "regional" styles or forces in Islamic countries.

For the proper identification of the earliest phase of Islamic style building as it developed on Indian soil, it was essential to know the sure dating of its monuments. Here, however, the determining factor of the very beginning of the style came from an unexpected source, namely the use of the "false" arch and dome. Even then, and later on in its developed stages, too, a number of problems connected with the overall study of monuments has not been solved due to lack of epigraphical evidence. Apart from building technique, problems connected with the following remain to be resolved: the development of architectural features such as the parapet, merlon/battlement, *minār*/finial, kiosk/*chhatri*, eave, bracket, oriel/balconied window; structural devices such as different roofing systems—flat or vaulted/groined/barrel/squinch/triangular-pendentive/arch-and-beam, arch and dome-shapes; functional parts of buildings like *mulūk-khāna/zanāna* galleries, meditation cells; different types of decoration like stone-carving, glazed-tile/stucco/color, inlay/*pietra dura*, painting/gilding, and ornament-patterns. This uncertainty has resulted in incorrect or incomplete inferences, even false assumptions. That may be due partly to the woefully inadequate attention paid to the study of Indian Islamic monuments, though very recently the study seems to be increasing, but quantitatively and not, unfortunately, qualitatively; however, neglect of epigraphical study is also responsible for this to no small an extent.

For example, disregard of epigraphic evidence has led to controversy regarding the functional identification of the Quṭb *Minār*, that is, whether it was a *ma'dhana* or a victory tower. It is, however, an integral, though disjointed, part of the nearby mosque, as is clear from a number of "mosque" inscriptions occurring thereon.[8] Likewise, the 'Alā'ī-Darwāza inscriptions do not mention the subject as a gate but only a mosque, i.e. the proposed extension of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque by 'Alāu'd-Dīn Khaljī, of which it was a part.[9] Similarly, a dated epigraph from Bijapur, so far unnoticed, would identify an authentic specimen of domestic architecture of the 'Ādil Shāhī period.[10] Such instances can be easily multiplied.

As stated earlier, it is in the dating of monuments that the Islamic inscriptions have a direct bearing. Such inscriptions have provided the foundation for the study of Mamlūk monuments, the earliest extant ones in the Indo-Islamic architectural style. Were it not for the inscriptions on the Quṭb mosque at Delhi and the one at Ajmer, on the Quṭb *Minār* and on Sultān-Ghārī's Tomb at Delhi, for example, it is indeed doubtful if the development of the style during the first three decades of Islamic buildings in India would have been clear. It was on the basis of the developing features of the Mamlūk style, determined by these dated buildings, that an undated mosque at Baṛi Khāṭu (Nagaur District, Rajasthan) could be identified as dating to this early phase, though its "referrent" inscription eloquently mentions its renovation in the time of Akbar.[11] Further, the *in situ* epigraph dated A.H. 600/1204 A.D., from Kāmān (Bharatpur District, Rajasthan) adds one more to the very small number of Mamlūk monuments.[12] Though known, this mosque has been overlooked by writers on, and students of, Indo-Islamic architecture.

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Non-existence of monumental remains of the next three quarters of a century has produced a lacuna in the architectural style between its formative phase (1187–1229/30 A.D.) and the fully developed style of the dated 'Alā'ī-Darwāza (Delhi, 1311 A.D.). It was only the 'Alā'ī-Darwāza inscription which pinpointed the authentic Khaljī style, corroborated, fortunately, by a few slightly later dated monuments of the period: the comparatively unknown Idgāh at Jalore (District headquarters, Rajasthan), dated A.H. 718 (1318 A.D.),[13] and a mosque at Bayana (Bharatpur District), dated A.H. 720/1320 A.D.[14]

There is a similar problem in regard to the origin and development of the typical Tughluq style. The identification of Ghiyāthu'd-Dīn Tughluq's tomb, the earliest monument in a fully developed style of the dynasty, which ostensibly blazed a long trail in time and extent, rests merely on indirect epigraphical evidence.[15] And there are practically no remains (with the possible exception of Rukh-i-'Ālam's Tomb at Multan in Pakistan, believed, again, according to traditional evidence, to have been built by Ghiyāthu'd-Dīn Tughluq Shāh during his pre-kingship period) to show how and when the early typical Tughluq features developed; a mature architectural style appears suddenly with this monument, as is the case with the one in the 'Alā'ī-Darwāza.

In some cases, inscriptions furnish the history of repairs, extensions or additions to monuments. The history of the Quṭb *Minār* is aptly said to be written in its inscriptions, without which the incongruity of the style of its upper two storys—so out of place in this monument as a whole—could not have been explained. That is also the case with extensions carried out by Iltutmish and 'Alāu'd-Dīn Khaljī to the Quṭb mosque. However, few sectarain monuments bear such epigraphs. On the other hand, forts and city-walls abound in inscriptions recording new constructions and reconstruction or repairs to buildings inside. It may be noted, in this context, that the "referrent" inscription of Fīrūz Tughluq mentioned earlier is very important.

Therefore, when epigraphs are wanting, errors are likely to occur. I may quote an example: The complex of buildings traditionally believed to represent 'Alāu'd-Dīn Khaljī's tomb and *madrasa*, recently has been assigned to the "very early" Mamlūk period, although it is totally dissimilar in style to any monument of this "very early" period and also to monuments of the Khaljī and early Tughluq periods; the building has even been pronounced the tomb of Muḥammad bin Sām, the Ghurid ruler.[16]

In this category of undated monuments, some of which have posed a problem as to their date, would fall a large number of stylistically important and known[17] monuments like Iltutmish's tomb, the so-called tomb of Balban, the tomb of Kabīru'd-Dīn Auliyā (Lāl-Gumbad), the Bijay-Manḍal, the Begampūrī mosque, the tomb of Buhlūl Lodī, dozens of octagonal and square Sayyid-Lodī tombs not only in Delhi, but also in different parts of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan States, the Moṭh-kī-Masjid, the octagonal tombs of Central Asian/Iranian variety both at Delhi and other parts of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, the Eklakhi Mausoleum (Pandua, West Bengal), the Aṭāla Mosque (Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh), brick buildings of Gujarat (Dholkā, Ahmedabad) and mosques like that of Sham'-i-Burhānī (Ahmedabad), this last-mentioned stated to be the earliest mosque in Gujarat with end-*minārs*, the Hoshang's tomb and other tombs and various *'Maḥal'* edifices at Mandu, a group of Bahmanī tombs at Gulbargā (Karnataka), and most of the Bahmanī and Barīdī tombs at Bidar (Karnataka), the Purānā Qal'a, its mosque and Sher-Manḍal, most of Akbar's buildings at Fatehpur Sikri and the tomb of Khān-i-Khānān at Delhi.

Even in the case of an inscribed monument, care must be taken in establishing beyond any doubt the connection of the inscribed tablet with it, for it may not be *in situ*: tablets are known to have been set up later than the buildings and *vice versa*. Among instances of this sort is an inscription recovered at the stately Solā-Khambhā mosque at Bidar and believed to belong to that mosque. Its date was read as A.H. 827 (1423/24 A.D.), instead of A.H. 727 (1326/27 A.D.)[18] Fortunately here two negatives—the wrong reading of the date and wrong ascription of the tablet, produced a positive result: of the ascription of the mosque, very probably correctly, to the early fifteenth century. Likewise a similar epigraph, dated A.H. 767/1367 A.D., found in debris near the Gulbarga Fort mosque, architecturally the most important monument of the Deccan and unique in its design in the Indian subcontinent, was taken to belong to it originally, thus resulting in a wrong date and authorship. The architect was identified as Iranian, though the inscription simply calls him, "the builder," the Iranian *Nisba* Qazwīnī, i.e. from Qazwīn, occurring after his father's name, cannot *necessarily* be taken to

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indicate his or even his father's Iranian domicile: in spite of the date, the mosque's architectural features would suggest a date later by about half a century, or at least, its extensive if not complete renovation by then, which, however, does not seem probable.[19] Likewise, the chronological and functional aspects of Akbar's buildings at Fatehpur Sikri is shrouded in uncertainty, despite copious historical literature of the period. Except for the Grant Mosque, no building there bears any "official" inscription. But a known but ignored important scribbling on an architecturally important building there, popularly known as Birbal's House but now sought to be identified as the "Northern Palace of the Ḥaram Sarā," provides valuable information. This dated *Nāgari* record not only bears a clear date, V.S. 1629/1572 A.D., but also perhaps the designation of the building.[20] Its bearing on the date of the Fatehpur Sikri monuments, where building activities are stated to have commenced at Akbar's orders after July 1571 only, need not be stressed.

Even a well-informed expert on Indian Islamic architecture like Professor J. Burton-Page, misled by the wrong date of a damaged inscription,[21] and ignoring its proper published version,[22] speaks of (extant) Khaljī buildings in several places of Gujarat, e.g. Broach, Cambay, Patan and Sidhpur, while, in fact, no Khaljī monument has survived in Gujarat.[23]

Similar is the neglect of an inscribed and hence chronologically established monument, namely the Īdgah of Jalore. The design of its buttress-*minār* at the north end provides the link, almost half-way, between the angular-cum-circular fluting of the Quṭb *Minār* and similar shaft-sections in the quoin-buttresses in monuments of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, at Delhi, for example the tomb called Dādī-kā-Gumbad and the Baṛā-Gumbad mosque, the latter a dated monument. This can be taken to provide evidence for the continuity of this design-tradition.

Also comparable is the example of an inscribed monument at Phulwāri near Patna (Bihar), dated A.H. 956 (1549/50 A.D.), which shows some features normally associated with the forceful indigenous architectural style of Akbar's buildings at Fatehpur Sikri. It may be reasonably taken to point to their continuity from the pre-Mughal period. This aspect needs proper investigation, as there has been recently some rethinking on the authorship of the Purānā Qal'a and more particularly its beautiful mosque.[24]

The problem of the origin of the square tombs at Delhi and at places like Nārnaul and Sarhind in the neighboring Harayana, the Punjab and Rajasthan, generally ascribed to the Lodī period (last quarter of the 9th/15th century),[25] the Chourāsī-Gumbad at Kalpi (Jalaun District, Uttar Pradesh) and the Bahmanī tombs at Bidar (one of them, *c.* A.H. 839/1436 A.D.) and their interconnection, if any, would not have been baffling had they borne inscriptions like, say, the Quṭb Shāhī tombs at Golconda (Hyderabad), which provide such data for a proper assessment of Quṭb Shāhī tomb architecture. Likewise, some interesting architectural phenomena, such as the origin and development of mosque architecture of different provinces—compare in this regard the 'Ādil Shāhīs and the Quṭb Shāhīs[26]—would have been well determined in the light of supporting epigraphs.[27]

With the possible exception of the coinage (which, however, has a limited scope) and ceramic fragments, the only body of material for the study of the art of the Delhi Sultanate and some other provincial kingdoms is monumental. The origin and growth of certain forms of this art, which is essentially decorative, e.g. plastic, stucco, encaustic- or glazed-tile, color (gilded-and-painted) and inlay/*pietra dura* decoration, have yet to be determined. Only if the material is dated can there be a meaningful study of the development, spread and source of different artistic features or traditions. While there may not be much difficulty in such study of indigenous forms like plastic art (exemplified in the rich and delicate decoration in carving in stone or terracotta), that is not the case with foreign art elements like stucco or encaustic tile-work or painting or inlay or *pietra dura*. These forms in monumental art have not been studied, except summarily, though there is no *complete* lack of dated monuments for attempting such a study. For example, there is the "polychromatic style" of the late Tughluq period (second half of the 14th/early 15th century), the culmination of stucco-art through the Sayyid and the Lodī period as seen in its finest specimen in Baṛā-Gumbad mosque, dated A.H. 900/1494 A.D., the best color-decoration in Delhi in the poet Jamālī's tomb (*c.*1528 A.D., on the basis of an inscribed *ghazal* of the poet) and of Bidar in Aḥmad Walī's tomb (*c.* A.H. 839/1436 A.D.), fine encaustic-tile-decoration of 'Alī Barid's tomb at Bidar dated A.H. 984 (1576/7 A.D.) or Khairu'l-Manāzil mosque, Delhi with an inscription dated A.H. 969 (1561–62

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A.D.). One other example is pertinent: an inscription in the excellently and profusely painted tomb of Aḥmad Shāh Walī quotes the name of its painter with a reference to his native place in Iran.[28]

Against these, there are many monuments like the Shīsh-Gumbad, in Delhi, which have material to provide for such a study, but no inscriptions. In cases such as this, lack of care in the handling of an inscription may lead to erroneous conclusions. For example, the mosque called Chīnī-ka-Burj in Delhi (Hazrat Nizāmud-Din), whose domed upper chamber is, or was at least a few decades ago, profusely ornamented with color decoration, incised plaster ornament and encaustic tile-work, was wrongly assigned to the "Afghān," i.e. Lodī period,[29] because the time of its unhistorical metrical inscription could not be fixed. The verses of this epigraph are quotations from the famous *Mathnavī*-poem *Nal-Daman* of Akbar's poet-laureate Faiḍī, which was composed in A.H. 1003/ 1594 A.D.; therefore, the monument could not have been built or decorated prior to that date.

One art-form of Indian Islamic monumental art which has been best served by inscriptions, particularly in the pre-Mughal period, is calligraphy. The variety of artistically executed calligraphic specimens in diverse scripts, conventional as well as unconventional, at times of amazing dimensions and also with ingenious ornamentation or decorative flourishes, provides a rich fare. While practically every region has its share of beautiful specimens of this art, it is perhaps in Gujarat and even more in Bengal that the mural records have provided some of the most beautiful and artistic epigraphic specimens, particularly those with *Tughrā* flourishes. A study of monumental calligraphy from various parts of the country should lead one to believe that the calligraphic art of Gujarat served as a model for the artists of Bengal who carried it to great heights.[30] The highly artistic though somewhat standardized calligraphy of several thirteenth and fourteenth century arch-shaped epitaphs from Gujarat, representing a mixture of *Naskh* or *Thulth* with strong element of *Riqā'* in the main text and floral *Kūfī* in the *Basmala*, shows this art at its best. It is only typical of Gujarat, where, however, it may have been inspired by the art of southern Arabia or executed possibly by the artist who came to Gujarat from that region.[31]

Some forts and epitaph remains in the Deccan also furnish pictorial forms of *Tughrā* in which the text outlines the figure of an animal: a lion, a parrot or even a human face.[32] Since there is a chronological continuity in monumental inscriptions, a very important means of study of this form of art, particularly of the pre-Mughal period, is easily available. The Mughal monumental art, being representative largely of *Nasta'līq* and in few cases of *Naskh* or *Thulth* scripts, beautifully executed no doubt, does not provide such rich variety as that of the earlier period. In any case, the Islamic inscriptions do provide a very rich material for an illuminating study of this art, which has yet to be attempted.[33]

NOTES

1. Inscriptions from Pakistan, where the earliest known inscriptions—9th century A.D. onwards—of the sub-continent have been found (*Pakistan Archaeology*, No. 3 [1966], pp. 65–69, Pls. XXV–XXXIX; *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1921–22, p. 21, Pl. XIIa; Muhammad Hamid Kuraishi, "A Kufic Sarada Inscription from the Peshawar Museum," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1925–26, p. 28, Pl. XI b) have not been taken into consideration.

2. Paul Horn, "Muhammadan Inscriptions from the Suba of Delhi," *E.I.*, Vol. II (1894), p. 143; *A.R.I.E.*, 1963–64, No. 303 of Appendix D; 1972–73, Nos. D, 31–32.

3. *A.R.I.E.*, 1972–73, Nos. D, 31–32.

4. Z.A. Desai, "The Kūfī Epitaphs from Bhadreswar in Gujarāt," *Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1965, pp. 1–8.

5. *A.R.I.E.*, 1972–73, No. D, 1.

6. An epitaph dated 1257 from Viśākhāpaṭnam (*ibid.*, 1953–54, No. C, 77), is an exception.

7. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashīd, ed. *Futūḥāt-i-Fīrūz Shāhī*, Aligarh 1954.

8. M. Ashraf Husain, *A Record of all the Quranic and Non-Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 47, Calcutta1936, p. 105.

9. G. Yazdani, "Inscriptions of the Khaljī Sulṭāns

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of Delhi and Their Contemporaries in Bengal," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1917–18, pp. 24–25, 26–27, 28–29.

10. *A.R.I.E.*, 1974–75, No. D, 269.

11. *Ibid.*, 1962–63, No. D, 197; S.A. Rahim, "Nine Inscriptions of Akbar from Rajasthan," *Epigraphia Indica*, Supplement, 1969, p. 49.

12. *A.R.I.E.*, 1965–66, No. D, 320. Cunningham describes the mosque, but (wrongly) assigns it to Iltutmish's period. See *A.S.R.*, Vol. XX, reprint ed., Varanasi 1969, p. 56.

13. *Annual Report*, 1966–67, No. D, 194. Its provenance was wrongly given in its earlier published version (for details, Z.A. Desai, "The Jalore Idgah Inscription of Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah Khaljī," *Epigraphia Indica Supplement*, 1972, pp. 12 ff.)

14. *Annual Report*, 1972–73, No. D, 89; Yazdani, Inscriptions of the Khaljī Sultans of Delhi," *Epigraphia Indo Moslemica*, 1917–18, p. 42.

15. It does not bear any record, but the tomb of this monarch's son situated in a bastion of the enclosure bears one, which though attributable to Tughluq period, is undated (*A.R.I.E.*, 1960–61, Nos. D, 54–55).

16. R. Nath, *History of Sultanate Architecture*, New Delhi 1978, p. 13.

17. A fairly large number of architecturally important Islamic monuments await survey and description. I have seen photographs of quite a few such edifices from the Haryana/Punjab region.

18. For details, *see* Mahdi Husain, "Six Inscriptions of Sultan Muhammad Bin Tughluq Shah," *Epigraphia Indica Supplement*, 1957 and 1958, pp. 39–40.

19. For details, *see* H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi, *History of Medieval Deccan* (1295–1724), Vol. II, Hyderabad 1974, pp. 234, 240.

20. Reproduced in enlarged size without any significant evaluation, in S.A.A. Rizwi, *Fathpur-Sikri*, Bombay 1975, p. 60, Figure 10, from Edmund W. Smith, *The Mughal Architecture of Fathpur Sikri*, Part II (reprint ed., Delhi 1973, p. 1, Plate XLIX).

21. James Burgess, *The Muhammadan Architecture of Broach, Cambay, Dholka*, London 1896, p. 22.

22. G. Yazdani, "Some New Inscriptions from Golaconda and Hyderabad," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1935–36, Supplement, p. 25.

23. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, II, Leiden 1965, p. 441. Of course, there are in Gujarat a few Khaljī records including a couple of Alaud-Dīn, but they are not *in situ*. But there is no Khaljī epigraph known from Sidhpur.

24. J. Burton-Page, "Indo-Islamic Architecture: A Commentary on Some False Assumptions," *Art and Archaeological Research Papers*, Vol. 6 (December 1974), p. 18. See also the paper by M.C. Joshi in this volume.

25. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, p. 264.

26. Sherwani and Joshi, *History*, pp. 271, 277, 278, 282–83, 301.

27. In the case of Bengal mostly, and Gujarat to a lesser extent, the problem is due to the disappearance or misplacing of inscriptions.

28. G. Yazdani, *Bidar Its History and Monuments*, Oxford 1947, p. 125.

29. *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments*, Vol. II, Calcutta 1919, pp. 141–142.

30. See Z.A. Desai, "Khaljī and Tughluq Inscriptions from Gujarat, "*Epigraphia Indica Supplement*, 1961, pp. 2–3; 1962, p. 2.

31. *Ibid.*, 1971, p. 3.

32. *A.R.I.E.*, 1959–60, No. D, 148; 1960–61, No. D, 121; 1967–68, No. D, 82; 1976–77, No. D, 47.

33. A survey of this facet of Indian Islamic Inscriptions has been attempted in a small way, by me, in the Chapter "Indian Epigraphy During the Muslim Period with Special Stress on Art" contributed to Vol. VII of the *Cultural Heritage of India*, Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, which is yet unpublished. Very recently, a study of the Calligraphic Art in Mughal Architecture by R. Nath has appeared (published 1979, Iran Society, Calcutta), but it fails to do justice to the subject, dealing more with the interpretational rather than artistic aspect of inscriptions and then again only representing a few selected ones, known from Agra, Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri only.

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Qur'ān and Tomb: The Religious Epigraphs of Two Early Sultanate Tombs in Delhi

ANTHONY WELCH

I. INTRODUCTION

RECENTLY I undertook an initial investigation of the religious epigraphs of a familiar Muslim monument in India, the *c.* 1191–1315 A.D. *jāmi masjid* of Delhi, now known as the Quwwat al-Islam mosque.[1] These inscriptions, selected primarily from the *Qur'ān* but also partly from the *Hadīth*, were first identified by M.A. Husain in 1936.[2] My principal concern was to arrive at possible explanations for the particular selection of Qur'anic verses used on the Quṭb *Minār* and on the mosque's *qiblah* screen, and I restricted myself in both instances to epigraphs produced under the patronage of Sulṭāns Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak and Iltutmish in the period between 1191 and 1235 A.D. Briefly summarized, the following conclusions developed out of this examination.

1. Architectural function affected the choice of epigraphs. Thus the Qur'ānic verses on the *minār* (Plate 240) are closely associated with the *minār's* symbolic function of marking the *Dar al-Islām*. These verses (e.g., Qur'ān, 48:6; 2:256–258) particularly emphasize Allah's omnipotence as well the pain and anguish awaiting disbelievers and idolators. Those who chose these verses would appear to have been keenly aware of the political and religious situation of these two sulṭāns ruling over people whose religious distance from Islam was immediately apparent. In this regard the *minār's* epigraphic references to idolators and polytheists are as pointed as the anti-Christian themes of the Qur'ānic verses selected for use in the late seventh century Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, where the epigraphic program stresses Islam's monotheism and its theological opposition to the concepts of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ.[3]

2. While the epigraphic program of the Qutb *Minār* seems to have been directed toward the non-Muslim population of the Delhi Sultanate, the mosque's *qiblah* screen (Plate 241) supported Qur'ānic verses, as well as *Hadīth,* that put much less emphasis on the punishments awaiting disbelievers; they stress instead the importance of worship, of adherence to the principles of Islam, and of recognition of the obligations incumbent on believers. The *qiblah* screen is thus appropriately directed at the Muslim population: it expounds more general religious statements, while the *minār* is the logical bearer of messages aimed at non-Muslims.

3. Those who selected these epigraphs were therefore not only aware of the symbolic functions of different architectural elements in this complex, but they were also striving to indicate the distance that they perceived to lie between them and the population they now ruled. There was nothing haphazard or rote about this selection: its content was carefully determined to speak to a specific situation. Thus

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there is virtually nothing in common between the verses used here and those used on the immediately preceding Ghaznavid and Ghurid monuments of Afghanistan.[4] While the architecture of the Quwwat al-Islam complex is clearly derived in part from this northern source, the epigraphic program is definitely not. Instead, the choice of Qur'ānic verses is a unique and creative selection, designed to respond to a new situation.

These conclusions suggest the feasibility of investigating in a similar manner two other early Sultanate monuments—the so-called "Sultan Ghari" tomb, the 1231 A.D. mausoleum of Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd, the son of Sultān Iltutmish; and the *c.* 1235 tomb presumed to be that of Iltutmish himself. Both Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd and his father had substantial reputations for piety, and their mausolea later functioned as important religious centers.[5]

II. THE TOMB OF NĀṢIR AL-DĪN MAḤMŪD

The tomb is located several kilometers west of the Quwwat al-Islam and was the center of a *madrasa* complex constructed under the patronage of Sultan Iltutmish. The large, square enclosure wall measures 33 m on a side. There is an imposing turret at each corner and a broad flight of stairs on the east side leading up to the entrance (Plate 242). The central courtyard of the tomb is largely occupied by an octagonal roof over the crypt, while the *miḥrāb*, located on the interior west wall of the court, is fronted by a single arcade, supported by marble and sandstone pillars. Two areas—the entrance and the *miḥrāb* — are provided with extensive Qur'ānic epigraphs.

Framing the marble entrance are three epigraphs (Plate 243), the first written in *Naskhī* style and the other two in *Kūfic*. The initial verse is from the *Qur'ān's sūrah al-Taubah*:[6]

> He only shall tend Allah's sanctuaries who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due and feareth none save Allah. For such (only) is it possible that they can be of the rightly guided.
>
> Count ye the slaking of a pilgrim's thirst and tendance of the Inviolable Place of Worship as (equal to the worth of) him who believeth in Allah and the Last Day, and striveth in the way of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah, Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk. (9:18–19)

These verses not only lay down the requirements of the faith but also speak of religious sanctuaries and pilgrimage, an indication perhaps that this earliest known monumental Muslim tomb in India was intended from its inception to serve as a place of pilgrimage. This portion of the ninth *sūrah* also appears on a nearly contemporary structure, arch number 9 of Iltutmish's extension of the *qiblah* screen of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque.

Around this inscription on the tomb's entrance is written a second lengthy epigraph, the first portion of *sūrah yā sīn*:

> Yā Sīn.
> By the wise *Qur'ān*,
> Lo! thou art of those sent
> on a straight path,
> A revelation of the Mighty, the Merciful,
> That thou mayst warn a folk whose fathers were not warned, so that they are heedless.
> Already hath the word proved true of most of them, for they believe not.
> Lo! We have put on their necks carcans reaching unto the chins, so that they are made stiff-necked.
> And We have set a bar before them and a bar behind them, and (thus) have covered them so that they see not. (36:1-9)

Here the reference seems specific: Islam comes as a warning to non-believers, and those who reject it will suffer. To the Muslim invaders of northern India, their rapid conquest of a large and heavily populated land must have seemed like a realization of these verses. They also appear elsewhere in this period—on Iltutmish's tomb and on his extension of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque's *qiblah* screen.

The final Qur'ānic selection bordering the entrance is the celebrated *āyat al-kursī* and two further verses from the *sūrah al-Baqarah*. A fundamental statement of divine omnipotence and kingship, it apparently functioned as a kind of metaphor of earthly kingship, for the *āyat al-kursī* appears inscribed on royal objects and monuments throughout the Muslim world.[7] It is the single most frequently used Qur'ānic verse on Islamic monuments in India. Its appearance here (and on Iltutmish's *c.* 1230–35 additions to the Quṭb-*Minār* and on his *c.* 1235 tomb) marks its first known use in India:

> Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh Him. Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the

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heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that intercedeth with Him save by His leave? He knoweth that which is in front of them and that which is behind them, while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save what He will. His Throne includeth the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the Sublime, the Tremendous.

There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejecteth false deities and believeth in Allah hath grasped a firm handhold which will never break. Allah is Hearer, Knower.

Allah is the Protecting Friend of those who believe. He bringeth them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness. Such are rightful owners of the Fire They will abide therein. (2: 255–257)

While the use of the *āyat al-kursī* (v. 255) is frequent, the inclusion of the following two verses is much less common; they function here as an additional reference to non-Muslims, their deities, and the fate awaiting them. Once again, those who selected the epigraphs were intending a collective statement particularly relevant to the new Muslim state.

Two other incriptions appear in this area. On the marble lintel of the doorway is written in *Kūfic* letters a single verse from the Qur'*ān's sūrah Al al-'Imrān*:

Say: O Allah! Owner of Sovereignty! Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest .... (3:26, incomplete)

Above it in *Naskhī* letters is inscribed one of the Muslim creeds:

There is no god but Allah, the King, the Truth, the Manifest; Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah, the truthful, the trusty.

Both of these inscriptions also occur on the tomb of Iltutmish, and while the latter epigraph is a fundamental statement of Muslim monotheism, the former is especially pertinent in the light of the replacement of Hindu kings by Muslims.

The other area of the tomb that bears epigraphs is the *miḥrāb* at the west wall (Plate 244). Along with the inscription of some of the names of God and the *shahāda* ("There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger."), verses from five different *sūrahs* of the *Qur'ān* are used, all of them on or around various parts of the *miḥrāb*. A single verse from *sūrah al-Jinn* is written in *Naskhī on the miḥrāb* arch:

And the places of worship are only for Allah, so pray not unto anyone along with Allah. (72:18)

This is the first use of this verse in India, and it does not appear on other structures built by Qutb al-Din Aybak and Iltutmish.

Around the *miḥrab* arch is inscribed in *Kūfic* part of the *sūrah al-Mulk:*

Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Sovereignty, and He is able to do all things.

Who hath created life and death that He may try you which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, . . . (67:1–2, incomplete)

The final word of this verse (*al-ghafūru*, "the Forgiving") has been omitted. The calligrapher who designed the epigraph may have forgotten the last word; the stone carver may not have planned the inscriptions properly; but in a building otherwise so meticulously executed, such an explanation seems puzzling. Could it be that "The Forgiving" was left out in order to reinforce the message of warning so crucial to the whole program?

Immediately above the *miḥrāb* is inscribed the *shahāda* while on the arch over the *miḥrāb* are two verses in *Naskhī* from *sūrah Al al-'Imrān:*

Lo! The first Sanctuary appointed for mankind was that at Mecca, a blessed place, a guidance to the peoples;

Wherein are plain memorials (of Allah's guidance); the place where Abraham stood up to pray; and whosoever entereth it is safe. And pilgrimage to the House is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither. (3:96–97, incomplete)

The whole final sentence is ommitted ("As for him who disbelieveth, (let him know that) lo! Allah is Independent of (all) creatures.") and it is a very conspicuous reference to non-Muslims. The two verses also appear on Iltutmish's extension of the *qiblah* screen of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque, though even in more truncated form with the final two sentences deleted. But in both instances the explicit references to disbelievers are left off the prayer wall.

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A similar deletion of a reference to non-Muslims occurs in a second selection from *sūrah Āl al-'Imrān* that is inscribed in *Kūfic* around the *miḥrāb*:

> Allah (himself) is Witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witness). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God save Him, the Almighty, the Wise.
>
> Lo! religion with Allah (is) the Surrender .... (13:18–19, incomplete)

The omitted portion of verse 19 reads as follows:

"Those who (formerly) received the Scripture differed only after knowledge came unto them, through transgression among themselves. Whoso disbelieveth the revelations of Allah (will find that) lo! Allah is swift at reckoning." *Surah* 3, verse 19, also appears on the *qiblah* wall of Iltutmish's tomb, where the final sentence—the most direct reference to non-believers—is left out as well.

Two final inscriptions grace the *miḥrāb* area of the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, the first a listing in *Kūfic* of eleven of the *asmā' al-husnā* (or ninety-nine beautiful names of God) and the second a portion of the *sūrah al-Fath* in *Naskhī:*

> Lo! We have given thee (O Muhammad) a signal victory, That Allah may forgive thee of thy sin that which is past and that which is to come, and may perfect His favor unto thee, and may guide thee on a right path, And that Allah may help thee with strong help—He it is Who sent down peace of reassurance into the hearts of the believers that they might add faith unto their faith. Allah's are the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is ever Knower, Wise—
>
> That He may bring the believing men and the believing women into Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide, and may remit from them their evil deeds—That, in the sight of Allah, is the Supreme triumph—(48:1–5)

These five verses from the *sūrah al-Fath* enjoy a popularity in Islamic art and architecture, second only to the *āyat al-kursī* (2:255),[8] and they appear on Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak's portion of the *qiblah* screen of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque and directly over the east entrance in the interior of Iltutmish's tomb. They are also included in the epigraphic program of the Qutb-*Minār's* first story, constructed under the patronage of Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak and that portion of the mosque complex most visible to believers and non-believers outside the walls. Thus it is striking that the mosque screen, the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, and Iltutmish's tomb are embellished with verses 1–5 alone, while the Qutb *Minār* bears verses 1–6. This additional verse contains one of the *Qur'ān's* most strident condemnations of idolators:

> And may punish the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women, and the idolatrous men and the idolatrous women, who think an evil thought concerning Allah. For them is the evil turn of fortune, and Allah is wroth against them and hath cursed them, and hath made ready for them hell, a hapless journey's end.

Verse 6 is specifically directed toward the non-Muslim majority beyond the walls of the mosque; in interior spaces, like the mosque's *qiblah* or the tombs of Iltutmish and his son, where only Muslims would be gathered, it is less immediately pertinent, and instead only the first five verses of *sūrah al-Fath*, holding out the promise of help and paradise for the faithful, are used.

The inscriptions of the two epigraphic areas of the "Sultan Ghari" tomb can be divided into the following thematic classifications. The tomb's entrance inscriptions focus on five themes:

1) Allah's supreme power as the giver and taker of life (2:225);
2) pilgrimage (9:19);
3) divine sovereignty (3:25);
4) Islam and the principles of the faith (9:18; 2:256);
5) dire warning to disbelievers (36:1–9; 2:257);

Not all of these messages are repeated in the interior around the *miḥrāb* on the west wall, where one finds the following themes:

1) Allah's supreme power as the giver and taker of life (67:1–2);
2) pilgrimage (3:96–97);
3) the centrality of monotheism (3:18-19);
4) the importance of worship (72:18);
5) the promise of victory and paradise for the faithful (48:1–5).

Themes 1 and 2 are shared, and this emphasis is entirely appropriate in the light of the building's function as a tomb and as an intended center of pilgrimage. Theme 1 acknowledges Allah's power over life and is an essential element in virtually every tomb epigraphic program. Theme 2 delineates the intended

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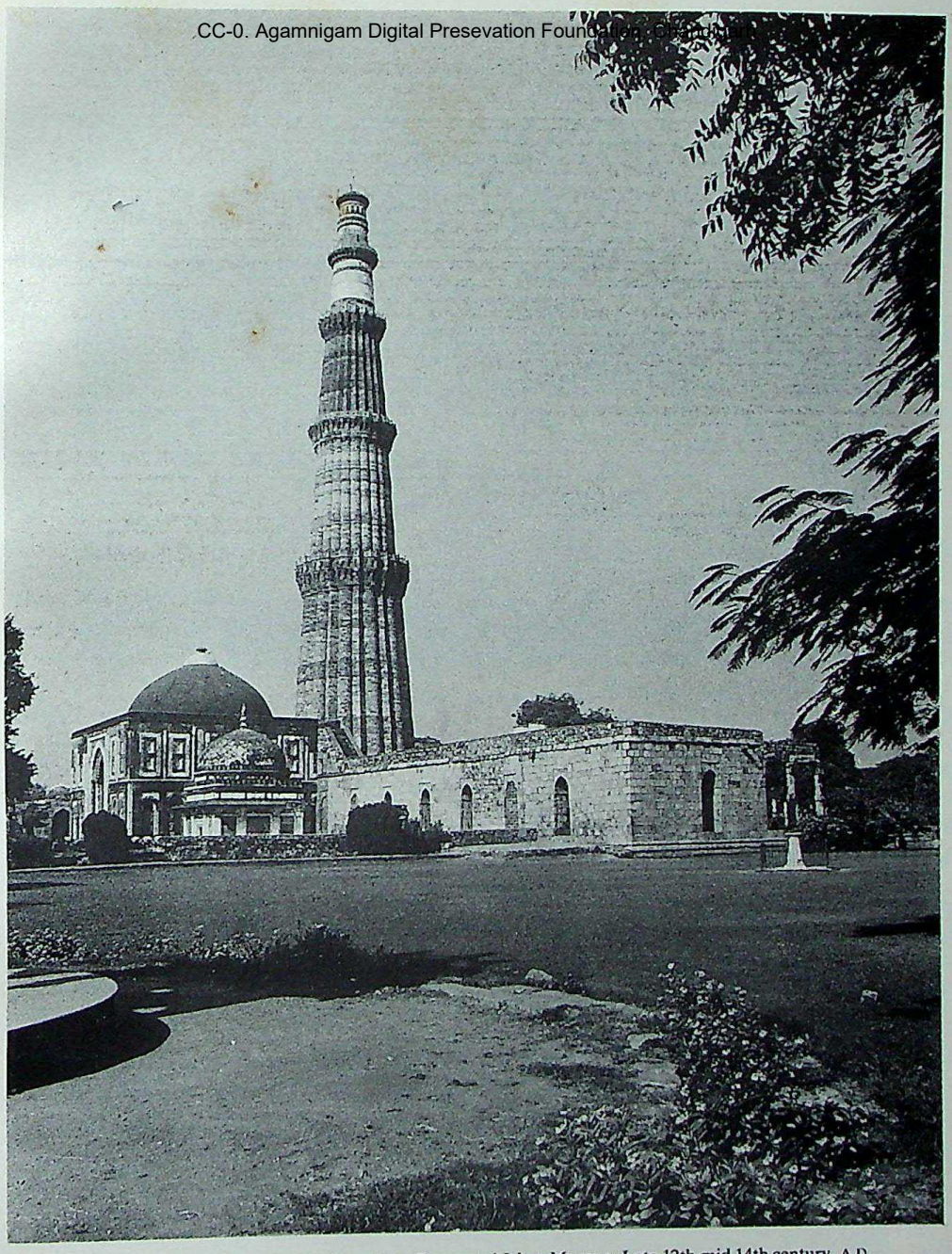

Plate 240. New Delhi. Quṭb Mināŕ of the Quwwat al-Islam Mosque. Late 12th-mid 14th century A.D.

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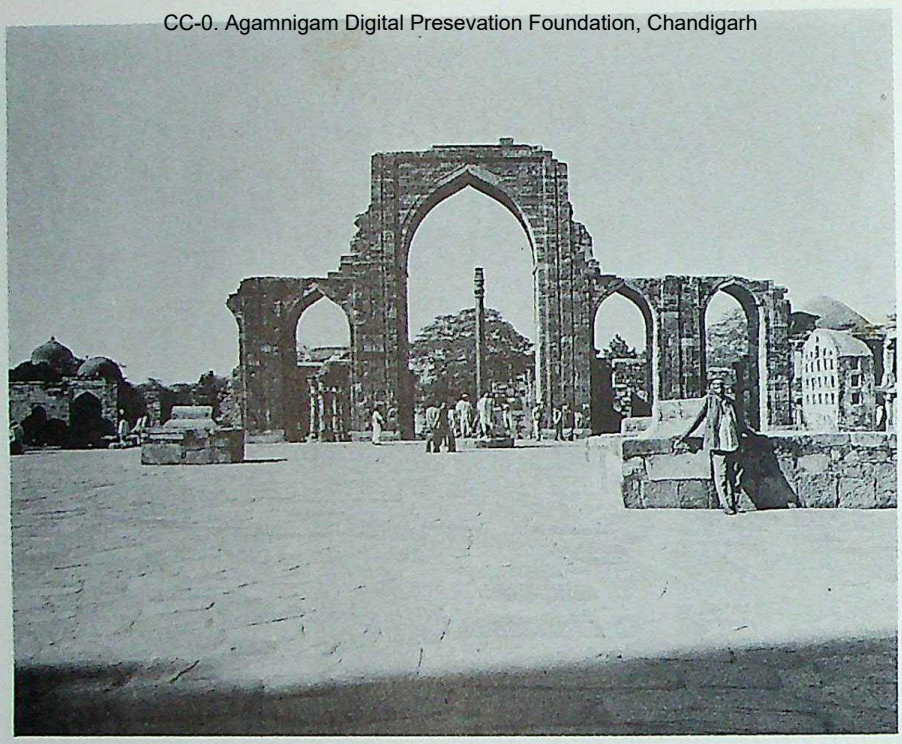
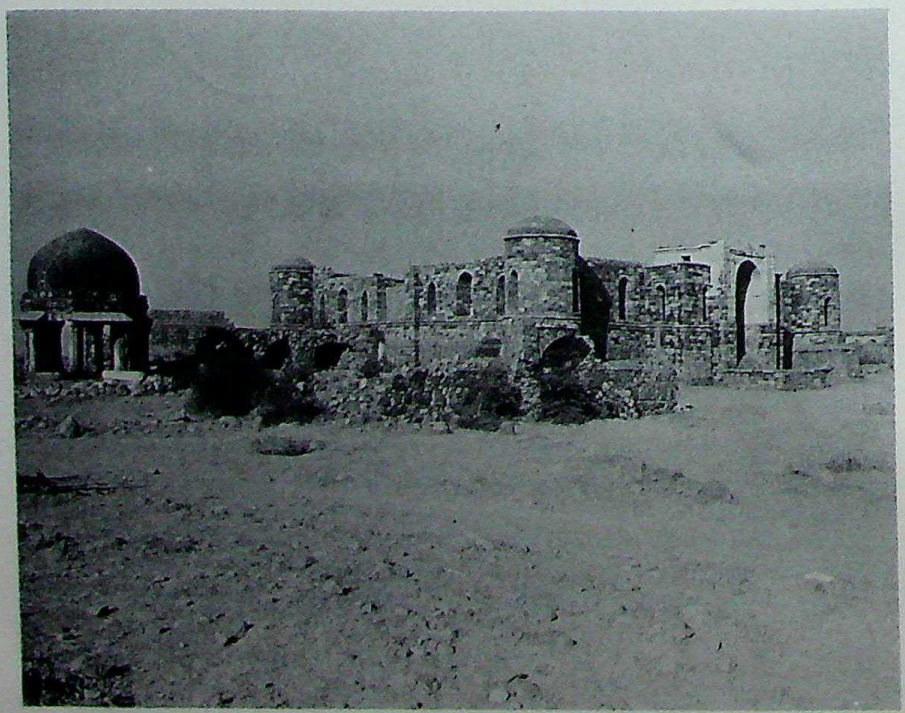


Plate 241. New Delhi. Aybak's screen, *qiblah* of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque. Late 12th century A.D.

Plate 242. New Delhi. Mausoleum of Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd. A.D. 1231.



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purpose of the building as a religious and political focal point, attempting (as did contemporary Seljuqs to the west and later Mughals in India) to unify the Muslim community around a legend and monument of a ruler-saint.

But the disparities between the two programs are instructive too. The theme of sovereignty is historically associated with monumental entranceways, while the importance of worship is suitably mentioned around the *miḥrāb*. And while the interior *miḥrāb* area speaks to the faithful and promises them paradise, the exterior entrance threatens disbelievers with a terrible fate. Indeed, disbelievers are not only *not* mentioned on the prayer wall, but their mention is even skillfully and deliberately avoided by the conspicuous omission of sentences of verses or verses of *sūrahs* (3:19; 3:97; 48:6; 67:3–30) that might ordinarily and otherwise be expected. The reiteration of warnings to disbelievers is first of all unnecessary here on the wall that Muslims faced in prayer, and it might even have been deemed inappropriate. Thus both architecturally and epigraphically the entrance and *qiblah* were understood as two distinct areas having different associations serving different functions, and bearing appropriately different messages. Architectural structure, as well as social and religious function of a building, could clearly affect the choice of epigraphs, and the person of religious learning (perhaps even the sultan) who selected the inscriptions was obviously sensitive to such factors.

The fact that themes of such complexity appear on a tomb is in itself impressive and a striking departure from earlier Islamic practice elsewhere in the Muslim world. From this period on and particularly in India, the mausolea of rulers serve as important epigraphic carriers of central Islamic doctrine. Epigraphically and architecturally, the tomb will serve as the most innovative (and the most important) structure in Islamic India.

The "Sultan Ghari" tomb presents nine different selections from Qur'ānic *sūrahs*. All but one of them also appear on other buildings constructed under the patronage of Sulṭān Iltutmish: the second and third stories of the Quṭb *Minār*; the south and north extensions of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque's *qiblah* screen; the *qiblah* screen of the Arhai-din-ka-jhompra mosque at Ajmer; and Iltutmish's own mausoleum. That these inscriptions are among a substantial number of repeated inscriptions on Iltutmish's buildings may well indicate that certain verses, like *Qur'ān* 36:1–9 (which is used in the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, in Iltutmish's tomb, and on Iltutmish's extension of the Quwwat al-Islam *qiblah* screen), were particular favorites of the sulṭan. If this is so, this group of verses could well serve as a valuable document for the understanding of Iltutmish's religious thought and values.

III. THE TOMB OF SULṬĀN ILTUTMISH

The *c.* 1235 mausoleum of Sulṭān Iltutmish is located at the Quwwat al-Islam complex in the northwest corner behind Iltutmish's northern extension of the *qiblah* screen. It is architecturally less and epigraphically more complex than that of his son (Plate 245).[9] Originally domed, it is a square building, measuring approximately 14 m on a side and provided with simple arched entrances in the south, east, and north walls. While there are now no exterior inscriptions, the tomb's four interior walls (Plate 246) are densely covered with quotations from the *Qur'ān* and, to a much lesser degree, the *Ḥadīth*. Iltutmish's tomb shares with the *c.* 1311 Ala'i *darwaza* and the 1494 Bara Gumbad *masjid* the distinction of being one of the very most lavishly inscribed buildings of the Sultanate period. A total of thirty different selections, many of them quite lengthy, from the *Qur'ān* are presented, and they are thematically consistent with contemporary structures already examined.[10]

Allah as sole power and sole creator is emphasized over the south entrance by selections from three different *sūrahs* of the *Qur'ān* (55:1–11; 59:21–24; and 108:1–3). Nearly the same selection from *sūrah al-Rahmān* also occurs on Quṭb al-Dīn's portion of the *qiblah* screen of the Quwwat al-Islam masjid:

> The Beneficent
> Hath made known the *Qur'ān*.
> He hath created man.
> He hath taught him utterance.
> The sun and the moon are made punctual.
> The stars and the trees adore.
> And the sky He hath uplifted; and He hath set the measure,
> That ye exceed not the measure,
> But observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof.
> And the earth hath He appointed for (His) creatures,
> Wherein are fruit and sheathed palm-trees, . . . (55:1–11)

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While these *Naskhī* lines delineate Allah's creative strength, other lines, also in *Naskhī*, from *sūrah al-Hashr*, describe divine omnipotence:

> If we had caused this *Qur'ān* to descend upon a mountain, thou (O Muhammad) verily hadst seen it humbled, rent asunder by the fear of Allah. Such similitudes coin We for mankind that haply they may reflect.
>
> He is Allah, than whom there is no other God, the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.
>
> He is Allah, than Whom there is no other God, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, Peace, the Keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Superb. Glorified by Allah from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him).
>
> He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59: 21–24)

Verses 22-23 are also repeated on the west wall, while this same selection of verses 21–24 is used on Quṭb al-Dīn's *qiblah* screen, on Iltutmish's extension of the Quṭb *Minār* on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, and on the *qiblah* wall of the Arhai-din-ka-jhompra mosque at Ajmer. Since the three latter structures were all built under Iltutmish's patronage, it is clear that these verses had special importance during his reign.

On the rest of the south wall are written Qur'ānic verses dealing with Allah's power (2:285–286), remainders of the Judgment (2:284; 71:4), and a warning to disbelievers from *sūrah Yā Sīn*:

> And We have set a bar before them and a bar behind them, and (thus) have covered them so that they see not.
>
> Whether thou warn them or thou warn them not, it is alike for them, for they believe not.
>
> Thou warnest only him who followeth the Reminder and feareth the Beneficent in secret. (36:9-11, incomplete)

The final line of verse eleven is found on the east wall, while the preceding verses (1–8) are written on the east, north, and west walls. It is virtually the same selection found on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, but in Iltutmish's tomb it spatially binds together the four walls with a statement directed at those beyond the Quwwat al-Islam complex who have not accepted Islam.

Over the east entrance is a repetition of Allah's promise of assistance and paradise to believers (48:1–5) that appears on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb. Added to it are verses dealing in particular with revelation (17:1–4; 97:1–3). On the wall are four verses expounding monotheism (6:162–166) and the final three verses of a selection of seven verses from the *sūrah Nūh* that appear on the south, east, and north walls and serve, like the verses from *sūrah Yā Sīn*, to link the interior together epigraphically:

> Lo! We sent Noah unto his people (saying): Warn thy people ere the painful doom come unto them.
>
> He said: O my people! Lo! I am a plain warner unto you.
>
> (Bidding you): Serve Allah and keep your duty unto Him and obey me,
>
> That He may forgive you somewhat of your sins and respite you to an appointed term. Lo! the term of Allah, when it cometh, cannot be delayed, if ye but knew.
>
> He said: My Lord: Lo! I have called unto my people night and day
>
> But all my calling doth but add to their repugnance; And lo! whenever I call unto them that Thou mayst pardon them they thrust their fingers in their ears and cover themselves with their garments and persist (in their refusal) and magnify themselves in pride. (71:1–7)

The first four verses of the *sūrah* appear on Quṭb al-Din's *qiblah* screen too.[11]

Four major themes dominate the north wall: the obligations of believers in Islam; the fundamental oneness of Allah; warnings to disbelievers; and the power of Allah as sole Creator. The duties of the faithful are set out in a long passage from *sūrah al-Mu'minūn* (23:1–14) that is written over the entrance in *Naskhī* style. Allah's oneness is presented in *Kūfic* style over the entrance in the form of the *sūrah al-Tanhīd*, one of the most powerful and frequently used declarations of Muslim monotheism:

> Say: He is Allah, the One!
> Allah, the eternally Besought of all!
> He begetteth not nor was begotten.
> And there is none comparable unto Him. (112:1–4)

Warnings to idolators are contained in verses that are continuations of larger passages on the other walls.

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Four verses from *sūrah Nūh* (71:1–4) are written in *Naskhī* style over the entrance, while a portion of verse 7 appears in *Kūfic* on the wall. Two *Kūfic* verses from *sūrah Yā Sīn* (36:5–6) are inscribed on the north wall as well. The final theme on the north side is a long passage from *sūrah al-Mu'minūn* (23:12–21) which begins by repeating three verses (12–14) that are used in the section from *sūrah al-Mu'minūn* (23:1–14) written, also in *Naskhī* style, over the north entrance. Clearly, each passage was seen as a separate unity, bound by a single theme: in the first selection Allah sets forth the obligations of believers, promises paradise to the faithful, and ends with a statement of divine creative power; in the second Allah describes divine creative and nurturing powers.

The west wall, the *quiblah* facing Mecca, is the most densely inscribed of all. Its themes are also more varied and present different emphases, for they center not on warnings but on the theme of the faith. Four principal concepts appear directly on the three *miḥrābs* that mark the west wall: the Revelation; paradise; Allah's power as the taker of life; and prayer.

Two passages in *Naskh* deal with the theme of the Revelation, the first from *sūrah Tā Hā* (20:1–12) and the second from *sūrah al-Wāqi'ah* (56:77–80);

> That (this) is indeed a noble *Qur'ān*
> In a Book kept hidden
> Which none toucheth save the purified,
> A revelation from the Lord of the Worlds.

Elsewhere on the west wall, as well as on other walls of the tomb, appear verses centering on the Revelation of the *Qur'ān*, the event that in Muslim terms so decisively separated the World of Islam from the *Jāhilīyyah* (Days of Ignorance before Islam) and from contemporary non-believers.

Two passages also focus on the promise of paradise for the faithful. Four verses from *sūrah al-Kahf* connect future paradise with present-day belief and righteousness:

> Lo! those who believe and do good works, theirs are the Gardens of Paradise for welcome,
> Wherein they will abide, with no desire to be removed from thence.
> Say: Though the sea became ink for the Words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like thereof to help.
> Say: I am only a mortal like you. My Lord inspireth in me that your God is only One God. And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord. (18: 107–110).

A single verse from *sūrah al-Ṣaff* gives a more graphic picture of paradise:

> He will forgive you your sins and bring you into Gardens underneath which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in Gardens of Eden. That is the supreme triumph. (61:12)

This selection was also used in Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak's *qiblah* screen.

Allah as the creator of life is a theme already seen on other walls of the mausoleum, but here on the west wall Allah's concomitant power as the taker of life is delineated, first in *Kūfic* in a short passage from *sūrah al-Bagarah*:

> . . . to the steadfast.
> Who say, when a misfortune striketh them: Lo! we are Allah's and lo! unto Him we are returning. (2:155–156)

Of verse 155 only the final word is used, presumably because without it the sense of verse 156 might have been lost. In a more complex fashion the theme of death is continued in four verses in *Naskh* from *sūrah Al al-'Imrān*:

> And verily we used to wish to death before ye met it (in the field). Now ye have seen it with your eyes. Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dieth or is slain, ye will turn back on your heels? He who turneth back on his heels doth no hurt to Allah, and Allah will reward the thankful.
> No soul can ever die except by Allah's leave and at a term appointed. Whoso desireth the reward of the world, We bestow on him thereof; and whoso desireth the reward of the Hereafter, We bestow on him thereof. We shall reward the thankful.
> And with how many a prophet have there been a number of devoted men who fought (beside him). They quailed not for aught that befell them in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor were they brought low. Allah loveth the steadfast. (3:143–146)

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But the issue in these four verses is not simply Allah who appoints the hour of death. It is also martyrdom, a concept obviously of central importance to the *ghāzīs* (frontier fighters for Islam) who had brought the *jihād* (Holy war) to India. Tangentially, too, it should be noted that verse 144 was recited by the first caliph, Abu Bakr, at the time of Muhammad's death: its visual recitation here can be seen as an implied comparison between the deceased, pious king, Iltutmish, and the Messenger, Muhammad, who revealed his faith.

Prayer is the fourth major concern on the *miḥrābs*, and it is considered by means of example in a single verse from *sūrah Āl al-'Imrān*:

> Then Zachariah prayed unto his Lord and said: My lord! Bestow upon me of Thy bounty goodly offspring. Lo! Thou art the Hearer of Prayer. (3:38)

Finally, in *Naskh* on the central *miḥrāb* there is a statement of fundamental Muslim faith that is also found in the same form on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb: "There is no god but Allah, the King, the Truth, the Manifest. There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, the truthful and trustworthy."

On the remainder of the west wall, above and beside the *miḥrābs*, is a large number of Qur'ānic selections focusing on several different themes. Obligations of belief in Islam are set out in two verses from *sūra al-Bagarah* (2:278–279), while Allah's omnipotence is presented through the traditional use of the *āyat al-kursī* from the same *sūrah* (2:255). Allah's power and the Last Judgment are revealed in two verses from *sūrah Āl al-'Imrān*:

> How (will it be with them) when We have brought them all together to a Day of which there is no doubt, when every soul will be paid in full what it hath earned, and they will not be wronged.
>
> Say: O Allah! Owner of sovereignty! Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo! Thou art Able to do all things. (3: 25–26)

Two earlier verses from the same *sūrah* (3: 17–18) deal with Allah's uniqueness.

Three Qur'ānic selections touch on various aspects of the Revelation. Three verses from *sūrah al-Ḥashr* (59: 21–23) were also used over the south entrance and set out both the power of the *Qur'ān* and Allah's power. That the verses were used twice on the tomb is one indication of their significance to the sulṭān, but they were also employed on his addition to the Quṭb *Minār*, on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, and on the Arhai-din-ka-jhompra mosque at Ajmer. Those who deny Muhammad the Messenger are described in a single *Naskhī* verse from *sūrah Āl al-'Imrān:*

> And if they deny thee, even so did they deny messengers who were before thee, who came with miracles and with the Psalms and with the Scripture giving light. (3: 184)

And Abraham, who rejected the idolatry in which he had been raised and became a fervent monotheist, is presented in four *Naskhī* verses from *sūrah al-Naḥl*, presumably chosen as an example to the non-Muslim population of northern India:

> Lo! Abraham was a nation obedient to Allah, by nature upright, and he was not of the idolators; Thankful for His bounties; He chose him and He guided him unto a straight path.
>
> And We gave him good in the world, and in the Hereafter he is among the righteous, And afterward We inspired thee (Muhammad, saying):
>
> Follow the religion of Abraham, as one by nature upright.
>
> He was not of the idolators. (16: 120–123)

Some of the *asmā' al-ḥusnā* (Allah's most beautiful names) are cited on the west wall, as elsewhere in the tomb. Two verses in *Naskh* from *sūrah al-Rahmān* cite the transience of life and the eternity of Allah:

> Everyone that is thereon will pass away;
> There remaineth but the Countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory. (55: 26–27)

And finally there is a continuation of the theme of warning from *sūrah Yā Sīn* (36: 6–7) that has appeared on the other three walls.

What emerges from a comparison of these four interior walls is instructive. The north, east, and south walls are relatively unified in their themes, for they stress the oneness of Allah, the obligations incumbent on believers, Allah's omnipotence, Allah's power as creator, and a clearly enunciated warning to disbelievers. And these concepts are presented through relatively few texts, most of which are also relatively long. While the west wall offers all of these

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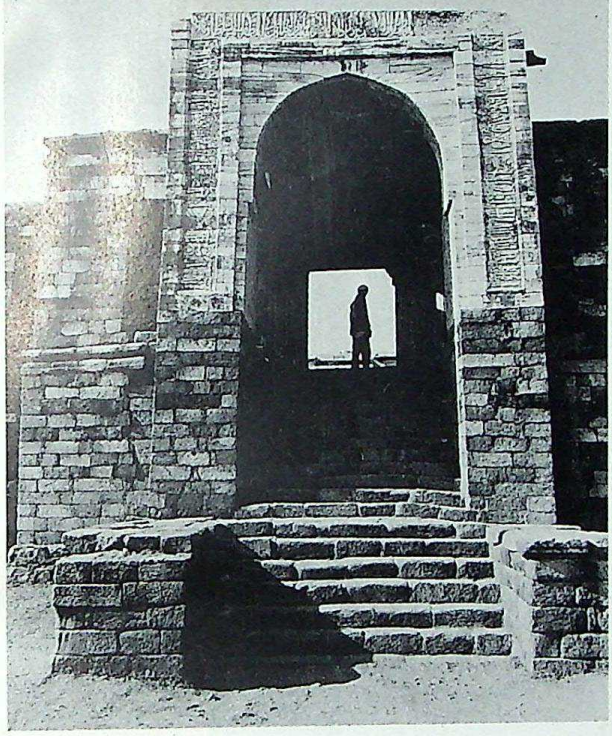

Plate 243. New Delhi. Mausoleum of Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd. Entrance, east side. A.D. 1231.

Plate 244. New Delhi. Mausoleum of Nāsir al-Dīn Mahmūd, *Miḥrāb*. A.D. 1231.

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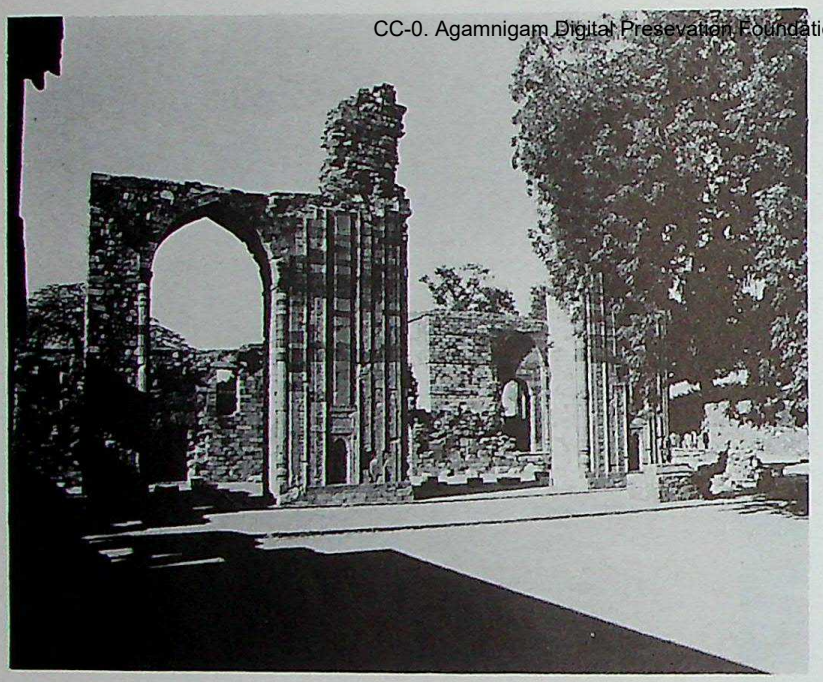

Plate 245. Quwwat al-Islam mosque. View of Iltutmish's northern screen extension and tomb of Iltutmish. *c.* A.D. 1233.

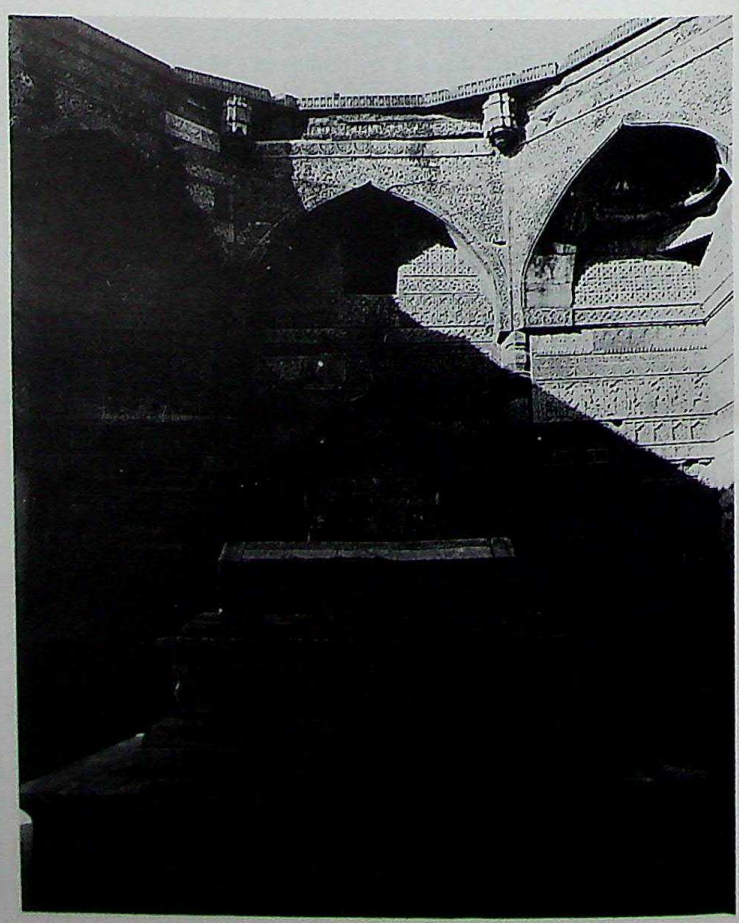

Plate 246. Quwwat al-Islam mosque. Iltutmish's tomb, *qiblah* and tomb cenotaph. *c.* A.D. 1233.

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Plate 247. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Talāqī Darwāza. *c.* 1540.

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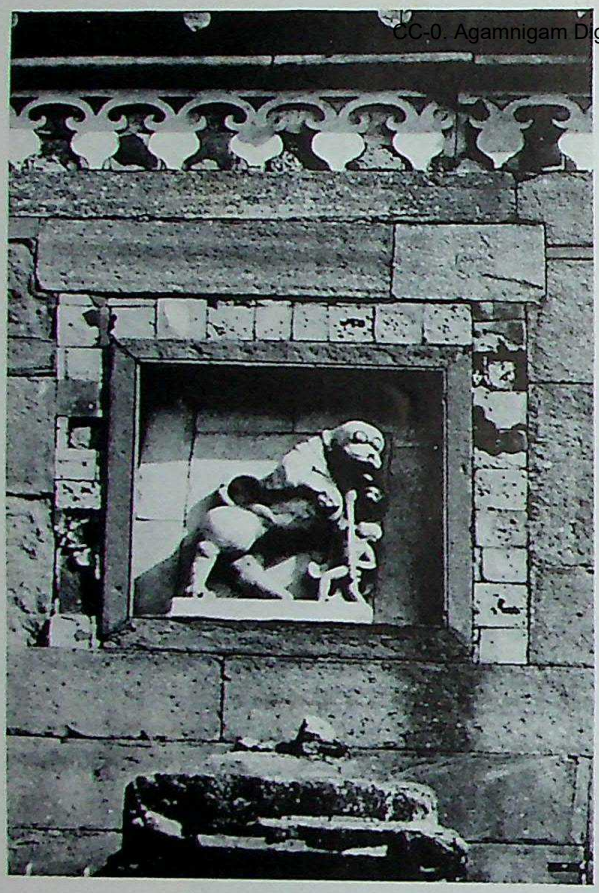
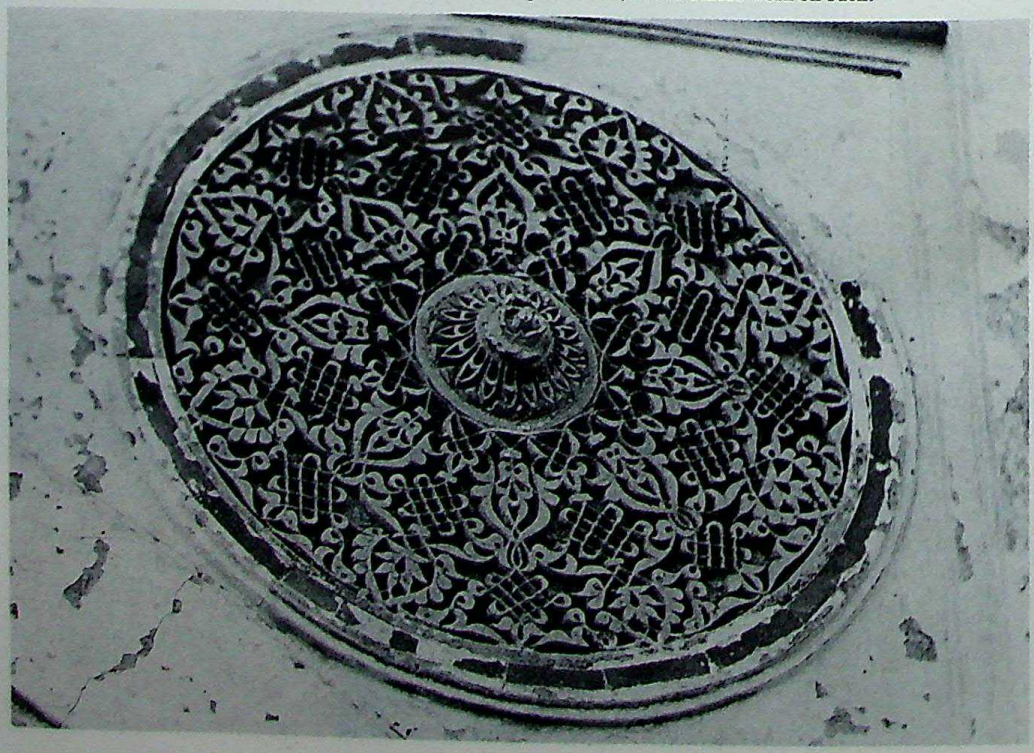


Plate 248. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Ṭalāqī Darwāza, detail: Leogryph.

Plate 249. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Talāqī Darwāza, detail: stucco work on back.



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themes too, there are additional themes of particular significance. Thus the *qiblah* wall is denser in both epigraphy and content, and instead of a few long passages, it generally employs numerous short quotations. The new themes should be noted. There is a great emphasis on the emergence of Islam, from Abraham's revelation through Muhammad's as well as on the Revelation itself. The importance of prayer is enunciated. Allah is identified not simply as the giver but also the taker of life, a concept of obvious importance for a mausoleum. Even the continuation of the theme of warning is notable, since it is more restricted in scope than on the other walls (where *sūrah* 71 as well as *sūrah* 36 were used) and since the passage used is one especially appropriate to the prayer wall, for it emphasizes the role of the Revelation in the warning to disbelievers:

> That thou mayst warn a folk whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless.
>
> Already hath the word proved true of most of them, for they believe not. (36: 6-7)

Whoever selected these epigraphs clearly wished to create a set of statements focused not simply on the situation of the Muslim sultans in the first half of the thirteenth century in northern India but also on the function of the mausoleum itself, as a monument to the ruler's achievements for Islam and as a prelude to paradise. And the west wall's wider and more distinctive range of meanings indicates the special symbolic significance of the *qiblah* wall to both architect and text-selecter.

The octagonal zone of transition that originally supported the now collapsed dome is also heavily inscribed, not with selections from a particular *sūrah* or *sūrahs* but with one *sūrah* alone, *sūrah al Mulk* (67: 1–30). While whole *sūrahs* are often used on Muslim structures, they are almost always the shorter *sūrahs* near the end of the *Qur'ān*. The use of all thirty verses of *sūrah al Mulk* is only paralleled in this general period in the eastern Muslim world by the use of the entire *sūrah Māriam* (19: 1–98) on the twelfth-century minaret of Djam in present-day Afghanistan, the heartland of the Ghurid dynasty that Qutb al-Din Aybak served, he invaded India. The appearance of the whole *sūrah Māriam* in Djam presumably indicates that it was either a particular favorite of the Ghurid patron or that it was in some way emblematic for the Ghurids as a dynasty. To explain the use of the *sūrah al-Mulk* on Iltutmish's tomb, a more specific hypothesis can be offered. Some of the *sūrah* is a restatement of themes already seen on the four lower walls:

> Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Sovereignty, and, He is Able to do all things.
>
> Who hath created life and death that He may try you which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving. (67: 1–2)

But the largest part of the *sūrah* is occupied with fervent warnings to disbelievers and deniers of the Revelation:

> And for those who disbelieve in their Lord there is the doom of hell, a hapless journey's end!
> When they are flung therein they hear its roaring as it boileth up,
>
> As it would burst with rage. Whenever a (fresh) host is flung therein the wardens thereof ask them: Came there unto you no warner?
> They say: Yea, verily, a warner came unto us; but we denied and said: Allah hath naught revealed; ye are in naught but a great error.
>
> And they say: Had we been wont to listen or have sense, we had not been among the dwellers in the flames. So they acknowledge their sins; but far removed (from mercy) are the dwellers in the flames. (67: 6–11)

This is already a familiar theme, not only in this structure but also on the "Sultan Ghari" tomb in early Sultanate epigraphy in general. And, in keeping with the particular situation of Islam in India, it is far more common there in this period than elsewhere in the Muslim world.

A final Qur'ānic selection should be noted. On the base of the tomb's marble cenotaph are carved verses from *sūrah al-Wāqi'ah* that deal explicitly with paradise:

> And the foremost in the race, the foremost in the race;
> Those are they who will be brought nigh
> In gardens of delight;
> A multitude of those of old and a few of those of later time.
> On line couches,
> Reclining therein face to face.
> There wait on them immortal youths
> With bowls and ewers and a cup from a pure spring wherefrom they get no aching of the head nor any madness,

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And fruit that they prefer and flesh of fowls that they desire.
And (there are) fair ones with wide, lovely eyes,
Like unto hidden pearls,
Reward for what they used to do.
There hear they no vain speaking nor recrimination (Naught) but the saying: Peace, (and again) Peace.
And those on the right hand; what of those on the right hand?
Among thornless lote-trees . . .(56: 10–28)

These lines, carved in *Naskhī*, are among the *Qur'ān's* lushest and most tangible descriptions of paradise. Resting on the support of the symbolic house of the deceased, the verses state the sulṭān's aspiration and serve as a statement of potential reward for the living community, and their function within the tomb's wider epigraphic program and its architecture is readily apparent.

As in the "Sultan Ghari" tomb, it is remarkable that such a selective and significant body of scripture should embellish a mausoleum, and the presence of this religious program indicates that the tomb functioned at this period in Islam's history in India as a quasi-sacred structure, important enough to the Muslim community for it to be the bearer of central Muslim content. In a more specific sense, however, Iltutmish's tomb also served as a model for the future, for its extensive epigraphic program appears to have been a kind of epigraphic repository for later Sultanate architecture. A very substantial number of Khalji, Tughluq, and Lodī buildings in and around Delhi are provided with Qur'ānic verses that make their first appearance in Iltutmish's tomb.

A final observation must be made about this sulṭān's mausoleum and, tangentially, about their companion structures in the corpus of late twelfth-early thirteenth century Sultanate architecture in Delhi and Ajmer. They are more densely and more complexly inscribed than any earlier buildings in Islamic history. Their enormous Qur'ānic epigraphic programs are unparalleled in Islam's preceding extant architecture. The explanation of this abundance may be tied to the most noteworthy theme of the epigraphs—the distinction the Muslim patrons steadily make between their beliefs and those of the non-Muslims whom they ruled. Epigraphic content stresses this distinction by emphasising Muslim monotheism and warning against disbelief, idolatry, and polytheism. Epigraphic density visually serves the same purpose. Arabic script is, after all, the central Muslim visual form, and its preëminence serves the dual purpose of differentiation from non-Muslims and affirmation of Muslim belief and cultural belonging to the wider Islamic world. Both functions were obviously central to the first two generations of Muslim rulers in northern India.

NOTES

1. A. Welch, "Islamic Architecture and Epigraphs in Sultanate India," in A.K. Narain, ed., *Studies in South Asian Art and Archaeology*, forthcoming.

2. M.A. Hussain, *A Record of all the Qur'anic and non-Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 47, Calcutta 1936. Hussain's admirable identification of epigraphs has been a basic resource for the above study and for this present investigation.

3. O. Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. III (1959), pp. 33–62.

4. For these monuments *see* S. Flury, "Das Schriftband an der Türe des Mahmud von Ghazna, 998–1030," *Der Islam*, Vol. VIII (1918), pp. 214–227; *idem*, "Le Décor épigraphique des monument de Ghazna," *Syria*, Vol. VI (1925), pp. 61–90; J. Sourdel-Thomine, "Deux minarets d'époque seljoukide en Afghanistan," *Syria*, Vol. XXX (1953), pp. 108–121; A. Maricq and G. Wiet, *Le Minaret de Djam, la découverte de la capitale des sultans Ghōrides*. Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique française en Afghanistan, Vol. 16, Paris, 1959; and J. Sourdel-Thomine, *Lashkari Bazar, Une Residence royale ghaznevide et ghōride*, Vol. 1B: *Le Décor non-figuratif et les inscriptions*. Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologique française en Afghanistan, Vol. XVIII, Paris, 1978.

5. For Sulṭān Iltutmish *see* K.A. Nizami, "The Religious Life and Leanings of Iltutmish," in K.A.

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Nizami, *Studies in Medieval Indian History and Culture,* Allahabad, pp. 13–40. Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥūd also enjoyed a similar reputation: his shrine was the center of a large religious community that flourished through Mughal times. *See* S.A.A. Naqvi, "Sultan Ghari, Delhi," *Ancient India*, Vol. III (1947), pp. 4–10.

6. All quotations from the *Qur'ān* are from M. Pickthall (trans.), *The Glorious Koran*, bi-lingual edition, London 1976.

7. A. Welch, *Calligraphy in the Arts of the Muslim World*, Austin and London 1979, includes a number of examples of its use.

8. *Ibid.*, for uses of the *sūrah al-Fatḥ.*

9. It is plausible that the mausoleum was originally provided with an exterior identifying inscription over its east entrance, as in the tomb of Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd, but in its present state the structure is neither dated nor does it name the person for whom it was built nor the builder. Though one is dealing with an attribution rather than an identification, the evidence for it is impressive:

A) The corbelled arch used in the three entrances to the tomb is structurally identical to that used in Iltutmish's 1229 extension of the *qiblah* screen of the Quwwat al-Islam mosque.

B) Calligraphic styles are strikingly similar in the tomb and in Iltutmish's extension of the *qiblah* screen.

C) The mausoleum is located on the northwest side of Iltutmish's *qiblah* extension, an appropriate association of tomb with one of the major components of the sultān's significant contributions to the Quwwat al-Islam complex.

D) Not only are the content and thematic direction of the tomb's epigraphs strikingly similar to what is found in the other monuments built under Iltutmish's patronage, but also many specific Qur'ānic passages in the tomb are repeated on these structures.

E) And, finally, since the mausoleum unquestionably belongs to this earliest period of Sultanate history, there is simply no other possible royal figure for whom such an impressive monument could have been built. Iltutmish took care to build a tomb in Lahore for his patron and predecessor, Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak, as well as in Delhi for his eldest son, Nāsir al-Dīn Maḥmud; it seems highly likely that he would have made similar arragements for himself.

10. Because it would be far too lengthy a procedure to include translations of all inscriptions, I will present only a selection of them, while identifying all verses used in the tomb.

11. In this analysis a rough distinction between calligraphic styles has been made by differentiating between *Kūfic* and *Naskhī* renderings of Arabic script. This classification is approximate and means little more than the distinction respectively between styles that are angular and styles that are cursive. In fact, several different *"Kūfic"* and *"Naskhī"* types are in use, and had questions of calligraphic style been central to this investigation of religious content, more exacting distinctions would have been necessary. Certain observations should, however, be made.

A) In keeping with developments in the Muslim world to the west, *Naskh* is used far more frequently than *Kūfic*: by the end of the twelfth century angular styles no longer enjoyed the preeminence they had possessed in early Islam, and both angular and cursive modes had come to be considered worthy forms. Despite its earlier status as the hieratic script par excellence, *Kūfic* does not appear more abundantly on entrances or on *qiblah* walls than other parts of these two structures.

B) Thus the use of different script styles is determined not by questions of languages, content, symbolism, or the special significance of particular passages. Instead, choice of different styles was essentially a question of design: selection is based upon decorative and compositional needs, and the question of calligraphic style was presumably left up to the calligrapher and architect.

C) In this regard the use of *sūrah* 71: 1-7 is particularly instructive. It appears on all but the *qiblah* wall. Over the south entrance 71: 4 (incomplete) is inscribed in *Kūfic*; on the east wall 71: 5-7 (incomplete) is carved in *Kūfic*, as is the rest of 71:7 on the north wall. But the beginning of this selection, 71: 1-4, is written in *Naskh* over the north entrance. Not only is the passage "broken up" so that a reader must proceed from north to south entrance, to east wall and back again to north wall, but also the styles of script vary; the first half of the whole passage is in cursive, while the second half is in angular style. Compositional needs were obviously vital considerations.

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The Authorship of Purānā Qil'a and Its Buildings

M.C. JOSHI

BUILT ON an ancient mound, the Purānā Qil'a complex (Figure 1), with its outstanding important buildings inside, is traditionally believed to be a part of the sixth medieval city of Delhi. The authorship of the complex has been attributed by medieval historians variously to Humāyun and Sher Shāh. The Purānā Qil'a and its surrounding moat appears to have been conceived as a royal citadel attached to a larger township which originally covered the low-lying ground around the fort on the south, north and west.

Khond Amīr's *Humāyun-nāmā*[1] records that in the year A.H. 940 (1533 A.D.) Humāyun laid the foundation of a city named Dīn Panāh in Delhi near the banks of the Yamuna. The progress of construction, according to this text, was so rapid that within a period of ten months the bastions, ramparts and gates could be almost completed. However, the author of the *Tārīkh-i-Dā'ūdī*[2] states that it was Sher Shāh who built a new city on the banks of Yamuna in Delhi, between Fīrozābād (Koṭla Fīroz Shāh area) and Kilokhari (near Okhla) in the village of Indrapat, in A.H. 947 (1540 A.D.) and inhabitated it, but could not complete it, due to his untimely demise. He also writes that Sher Shāh named the fort as Shergarh. This statement is also corroborated by the *Tārīkh-i-Shershāhī*[3], an earlier work, which records that Sher Shāh ordered two forts to be built in Delhi by the bank of Yamuna, the little one for the residence of local governor and the larger one around the city. But the fortifications enclosing the town remained incomplete by the time of his death. According to the *Tārīkh-i-Khān Jahān*,[4] his son Salīm Shāh Sūr (1545-54 A.D.) is stated to have built a wall encircling the city of Humāyun.

Zafar Hasan,[5] a modern writer on the subject, admitting that it is difficult to judge how much of the citadel (Purānā Qil'a) is the work of Humāyun and how much of Sher Shāh, however, states that according to general opinion the walls and gates are considered to be the work of Humāyun and mosque and Sher Mandal, of Sher Shāh. Another scholar even writes: "It is believed that Sher Shāh left Purānā Qil'a unfinished and it was completed by Humāyun."[6]

Among these conflicting statements and opinions, which one is accurate is difficult to judge. I, therefore, intend to reëxamine the available epigraphical material and the evidence furnished by art styles employed in various gates and buildings to verify the literary references.

GATES

The epigraphical data of historical value are extremely meager in respect of Purānā Qil'a: the only sources for drawing inference are a few inscriptions in ink found inside its northern and southern gates known respectively as the Talāqī Darwāza and Humāyun Darwāza. The Barā Darwāza on the west possesses no historical epigraphs.

The Talāqī Darwāza (i.e. forbidden portal) is a

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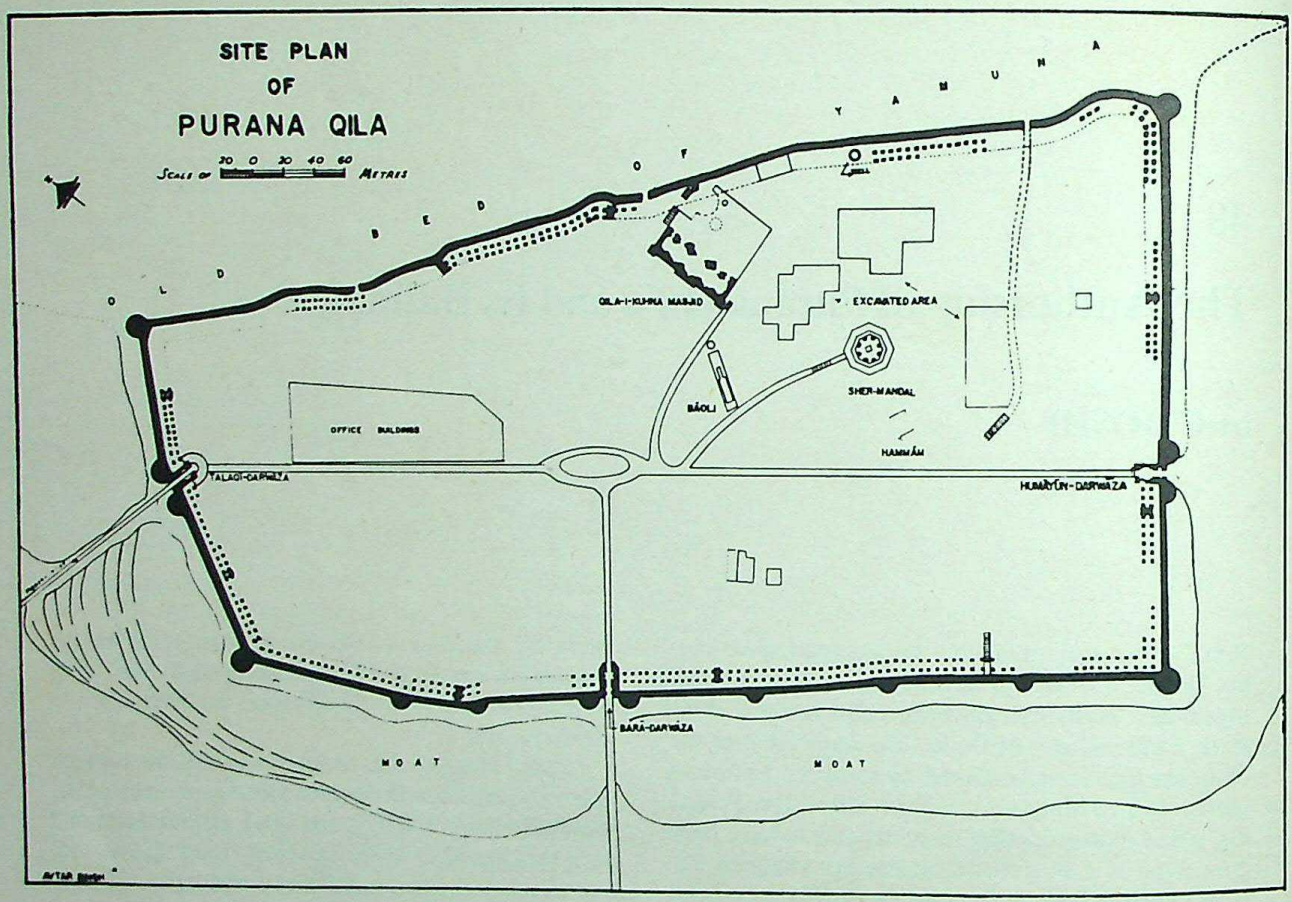

Figure 1. New Delhi. Purānā Qil'a. Plan.

tall building raised amid two bastions on the northern front of the citadel (Plate 247). Comprising a storied superstructure crowned by an octagonal and two square *chatrīs* (*caukhandīs*), the gate has an attractive facade marked with a framed-arcuate recess containing within it the actual entrance-arch in the ground floor, a similar arched-opening in the first floor and a smaller window in the second.

The entrance frame is decked with two projecting balconies (*gaukhs*), slabs with geometric flowers below and marble reliefs depicting a man fighting with a boldly carved conventional tiger or lion (Plate 248) toward the top on either side. The apex of the arched recess has a rayed disk, partly carved with a human face. The veneer slabs are mainly in red sandstone above the first floor and the rest in buff stone with the exception of a few marble panels or strips. The inner face of the second floor of the gate contains fine examples of stucco decoration (Plate 249).

One obliterated record within (west side of entrance) the Talāqī Darwāza preserves a date A.H. 947 (1540/41 A.D.), falling within the reign of Sher Shāh, whereas a longer epigraph thereon refers to Humāyun. It has been translated by Zafar Hasan:

> O God preserve this house of Humāyun (literally auspicious house) from damage.[7]

These may be ordinary scribblings, yet they are not without some significance, for, according to Zafar Hasan, they seem to suggest that the gate was little used after the date A.H. 947 (1541 A.D.) was recorded there. Further, the Talāqī Darwāza appears to have served the purpose of only a casual entrance as there is no causeway or bridge in front of it over the encircling moat, unlike the western entrance, or Barā Darwāza, of the Purānā Qil'a.

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However, the most important epigraphical evidence relating to construction is found in the southern gate of this citadel, i.e. the Humāyun Darwāza (Plate 250). Although internally damaged, it is almost similar in design and shape to Talāqī Darwāza except for a slight difference in the construction of superstructure and some other details indicated by the existence of two hexagonal crowning *chatrīs* and figures of two miniature elephants above the *gaukhs* on either side of the frame as well as a crescent moon forming a part of the human face on the apex of the arched recess.

An inscription written in *Naskh* characters with black ink on the western part of its upper story preserves a reference to the date A.D. 950 (1543/44 A.D.) and the ruling monarch Sher Shāh. It has been translated by Zafar Hasan:

> (1) The gate of the peaceful valley was completed in the reign of Sher Shah who wears a crown.
> (2) By order of Ghazi Khan Lohani who is . . . a loyal well wisher of the king.
> (3) The king has spent an abundance of silver and gold (on the erection of the gate) so that there may remain a memorial of him through the years.
> (4) It was in the year 950 . . . resplendent made bright.[8]

This epigraph thus clearly indicates that Sher Shāh contributed to the construction of this gate by spending a large sum of money. Must it, then, be inferred that the other gates, too, including Talāqī Darwāza, were built by him and that there is no truth in Khond Amīr's statement? Yet the epigraphical reference to Talāqī Darwāza as *Khānā* or house of Humāyun must also be taken into account. The use of such an expression, even by an unofficial scribe, should not be without significance. There can, it seems, be two possibilities: either the author of this record was a supporter of Humāyun who wanted to perpetuate his memory during the time of Sher Shāh or other later rulers, or this is an epigraph of the period of Humāyun written by some workman associated with the construction of the gate. The latter inference seems to be sounder; yet further evidence is needed to support this surmise. The structural form of all the gates is, therefore, analyzed.

Although the main portal or the Barā Darwāza (Plate 251) is located between two bastions, it is somewhat different from the other two gates. With no superimposed archways on the front within the recessed apse, it has *gaukhs* and a crowning parapet with vertical loopholes and enameled top, besides a terraced inner face. It bears Mughal as well as non-Mughal artistic traits of which the former are represented by its Tudor arches, six-pointed star on the spandrels and an hexagonal entrance-chamber with a deep alcove amid walls of each of the four sides. The projecting-balconies in the upper-half of the gate-front and *chatrīs* surmounting the flanking bastions are the architectural traits of Indian origin which are very well marked in the pre-Mughal architecture of Delhi, yet these are only decorative features. It has to be admitted that the elevational form of the Barā Darwāza is primarily determined by the Tudor shape of arch and the hexagonal plan of the entrance chamber. These characteristics, being absent in the earlier architectural tradition of Delhi, appear to be imported elements for which credit must be given to early Mughals including Humāyun, the founder of the fort. However, crowning *chatrīs* on the sides and *gaukhs* on the top of entrance-frame may have been added by Sher Shāh. Similarly, in regard to the other two gateways also the Mughal arch plays the key role in their structures, despite the fact that their narrow apsed-recesses with triple openings may have been developed from the entrances of some of the square tombs of the Lodī period, like the Barā Khān-kā-Gumbad[9] in New Delhi, due to the peculiar location of the portals in narrow slopes.

Therefore, the construction of the Talāqī Darwāza as well as the Humāyun Darwāza must be ascribed to Humāyun, although Sher Shāh's contribution in embellishing and completing them cannot be denied. A closer examination of these gates suggests that the upper parts of these *darwāzas* bearing towering *chatrīs, gaukhs,* marble sculptures and even corresponding parts of the interior must have been built or added by Sher Shāh after spending a considerable sum as has been indicated in the epigraph of the Humāyun Darwāza. The name of the Talāqī gate as Humāyun-Kẖānā or edifice of Humāyun is also thus fully justified. However, the marble relief on it depicting a man combating a lion, although a conventional motif, may have been deliberately introduced here to symbolize Sher Shāh's valor, for only after killing a lion Farīd became known as Sher or Sher Khān. The human-faced disk marking the apex of the entrance-recesses of Humāyun and Talāqī portals perhaps was intended to represent the moon and sun guarding the citadel in conformity with Hindu beliefs, for Sher Shāh was not a fanatic. The upper portions of

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Talāqī gate, including the room on second floor with stucco decoration and parts of front faced with red sandstone, most likely are works of Sher Shāh.

A comparison of central archways with bracketed entrances of Ibrāhim Sūr's tomb[10] (Plate 252, Narnaul, Haryana), which were built by Sher Shāh according to an inscription thereon, and those of Purānā Qil'a further supports the above point of view. In fact, like the Sūr monuments of Sasarām, the mausoleum of Ibrahim Sūr is an improved and a refined version of Barā Gumbad or other square Lodī tombs, including Chote Khan-kā-Gumbad.[11] However, the Sher Darwāza, opposite the Purānā Qil'a, and the gate to Sher Shāh's fort at Rohtas (Plate 253; near the Jhelum in Pakistan) bear Mughal structural fabric with features of Sūr architecture.

QIL'A-I-KUHNA MASJID

The Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, (Figure 2, Plate 254) or the mosque within Purānā Qil'a has been regarded by all the writers on the subject as one of the significant constructions of Sher Shāh (1540/41 A.D.) on the authority of *Tārīkh-i-Shershāhī*[12] and *Tārīkh-i-Dā'ūdī*.[13] The former, calling the mosque a Jāmi Masjid, records that in embellishing it, gold, lapis lazuli and other materials were expended by the builder. The inscriptions on it stress its religious character only and bear no historical reference.[14] Architecturally, this edifice expresses the logical development of the structural model represented by Masjid Moṭh and Jamālī-Kamālī mosques; yet the employment of Tudor arches and *nīm-gumbads* (half-domes) in it supporting the ceiling of the side-bays[15] certainly suggests a strong Mughal association as in the case of the gateways. It is not unlikely, in this case also, that this mosque was designed and founded by Humāyun but was completed by Sher Shāh, who seems to have been responsible for building the upper part of the superstructure including the central dome, crenelated parapet of the roof—also encountered in his Narnaul and Sasarām monuments—and introducing structual ornamentation including blue tile work, colorful gilded paintings, lotus-bud fringe in arches, and ornate *miḥrābs* (Plate 255). Perhaps the Sūr ruler also built its roof flanking the central dome and the two domed pavilions, the bases of which are still partially extant (Plate 256). Vogel[16] considers them to be later additions, but one does not agree with him as the tripled domed tradition in standard Mughal mosques does not seem to have been borrowed from any mosque other than the Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, which served as the primal model for all the later Mughal mosques. However, the unfinished marble facing of the front, with rich inlay designs (Plate 257) can in no case be older than the time of Akbar (1556–1605 A.D.), because the ornate geometric patterns as well as their techniques of execution are purely Mughal in character and absent in Sūr or Sultanate monuments.

SHER MANḌAL

Close to the mosque on the south is the Sher Manḍal, a double-storied octagonal tower faced with red sandstone and crowned by an octagonal *chatrī* (Plate 258). It is externally relieved on each face with superimposed arched-recesses, of which the lower ones are fully closed, but the upper ones have openings leading to a single room in the first floor with a cruciform plan. The ground story, which perhaps is in the form of a domed chamber, is totally closed from all sides.

The construction of this tower has been attributed by all scholars to Sher Shāh, probably following the *Tarīkh-ī-Dā'ūdī*,[17] which states that within the fort a small palace, left incomplete, was named by Sher Shāh as Sher Manḍal. Popularly it is believed to be the building that served as the library from which Humāyun fell and died subsequently in 1556 A.D.

There is no inscription in the Sher Manḍal, but stylistically it is purely a Mughal octagon, without *guldastās* and an encircling verandah, containing deep alcoves, cruciform room, inlay work, specially geometric designs in dados (Plate 259), six-pointed star in spandrels, chevrons and other carved Mughal patterns on the pillars of the *chatrī*. The only pre-Mughal features of this tower are the crowning *chatrī* and *chajjās* on the exterior.

The earliest inscribed dated octagonal building in India closer in format to Sher Manḍal is the domed tomb of Shāh Quli-Khān at Narnaul. That is a domed octagonal structure raised on a low platform with deep arched-recess on each face and has a date referring to the completion of dome in A.H. 982 (1574 A.D.) or A.H. 986.[18] The Sher Manḍal, which bears all features of the Akbari style, should not therefore be dated prior to Akbar's reign. It would, however, be tempting to call this tower Muṭhamman (Musamman) Burj in conformity with Mughal usage rather than Sher Manḍal.

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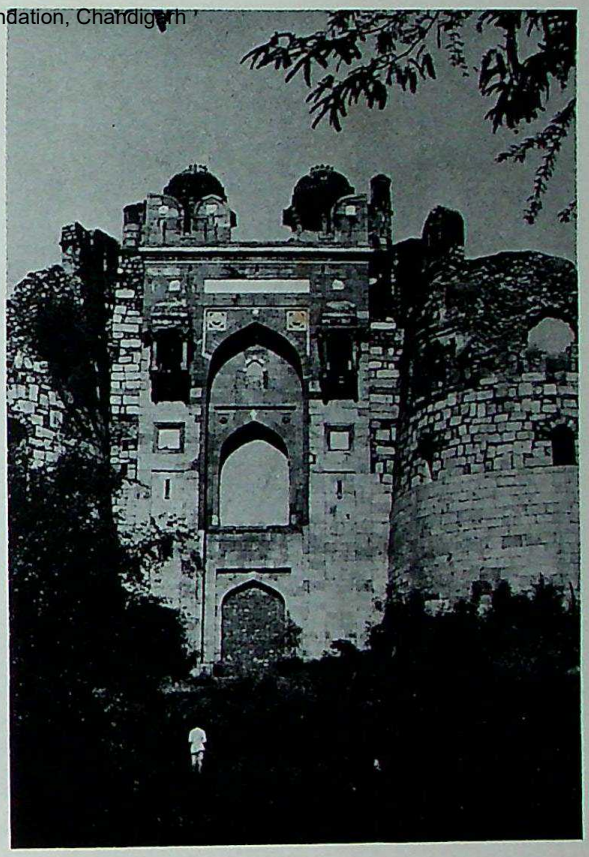
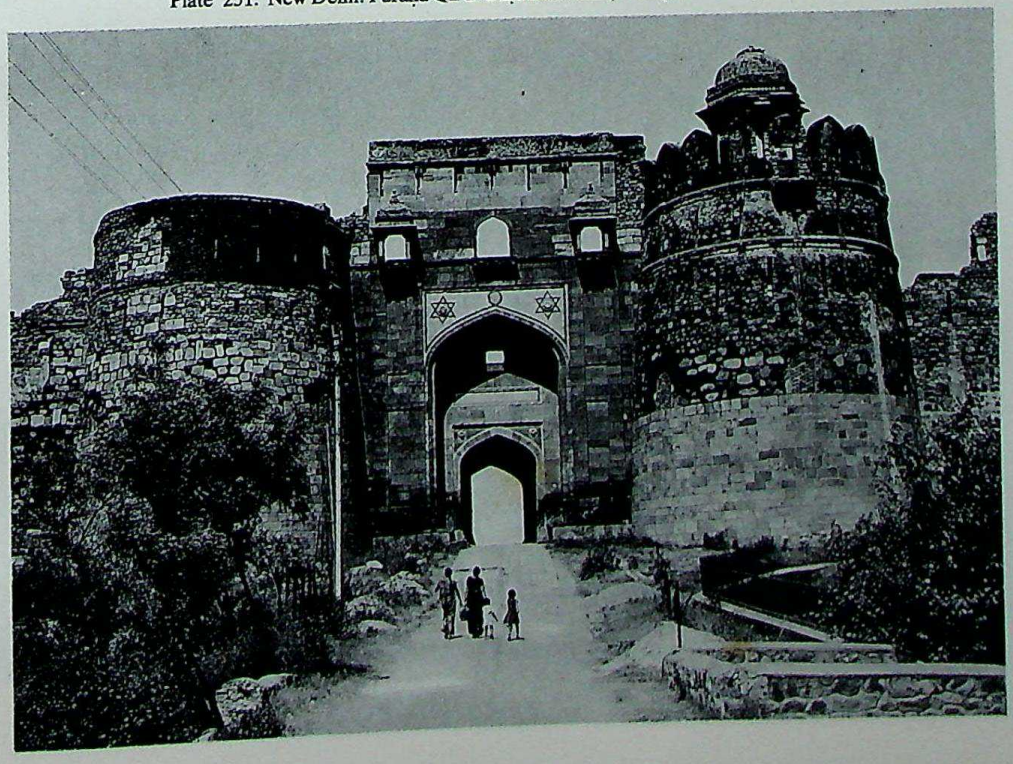


Plate 250. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Humāyun Darwāza. *c.* 1540.

Plate 251. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Baṛā Darwāza (Principal Gateway). *c.* 1540.



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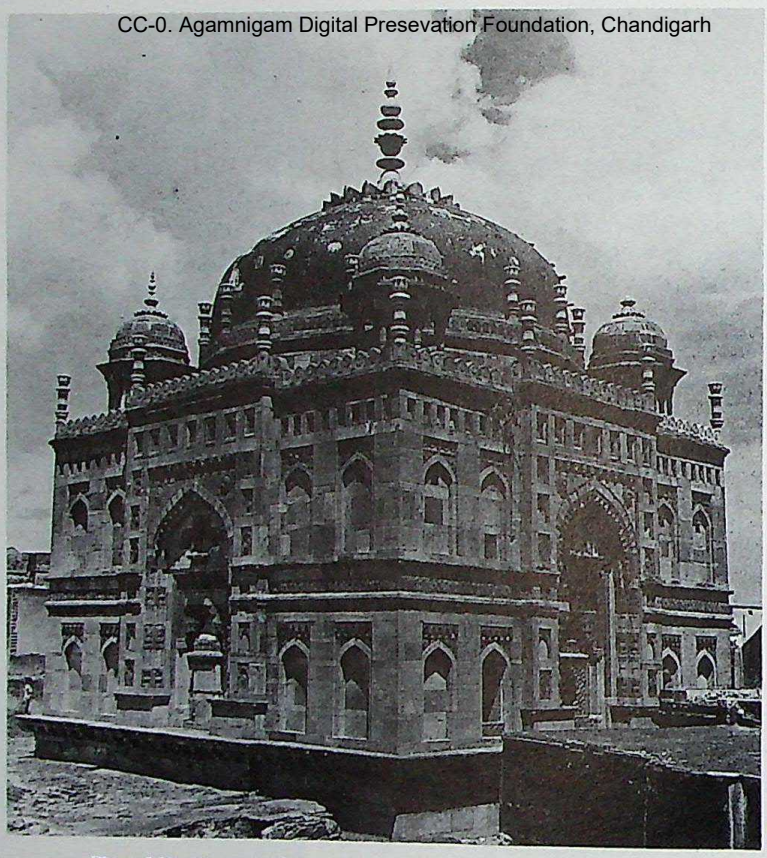
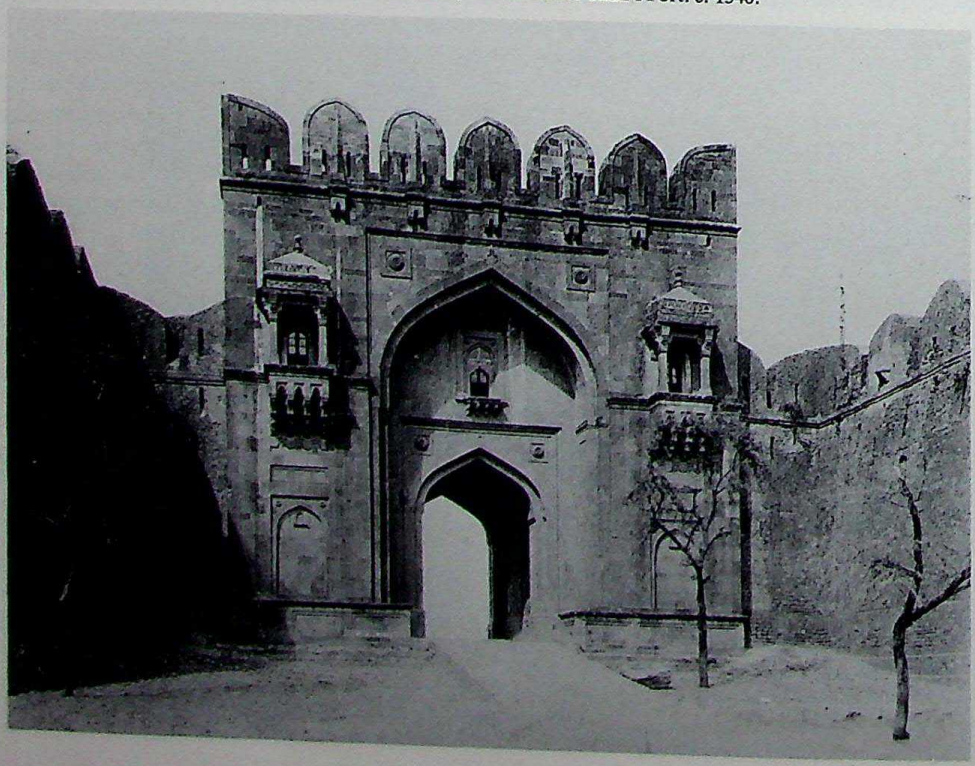


Plate 252. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrahīm Sur. From southwest. *c.* 1540.

Plate 253. Rohtas (Pakistan). Gate of Sher Shah's Fort. *c.* 1540.



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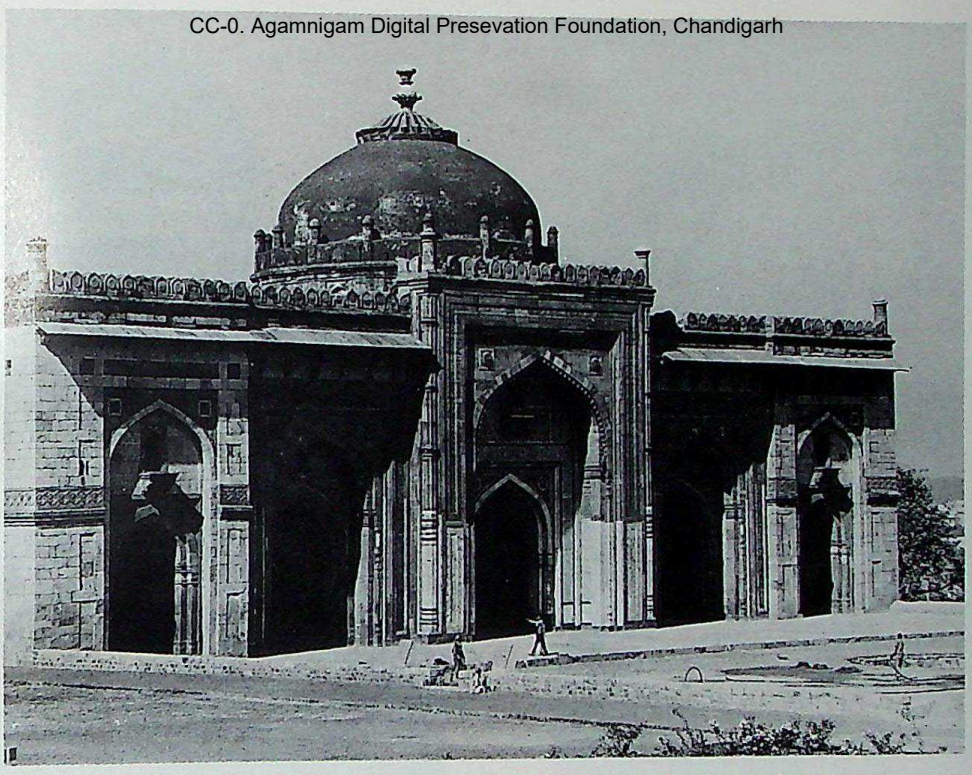

Plate 254. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, view from southeast.

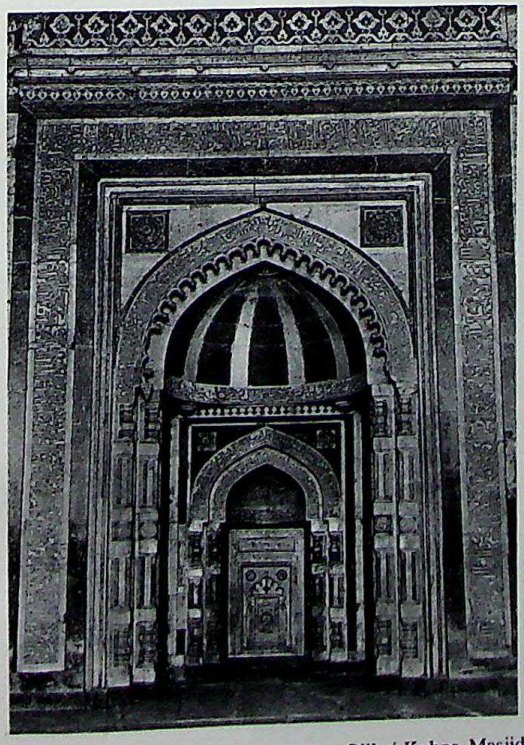

Plate 255. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, detail: side flanking *miḥrabs*.

Plate 256. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, upper terrace.

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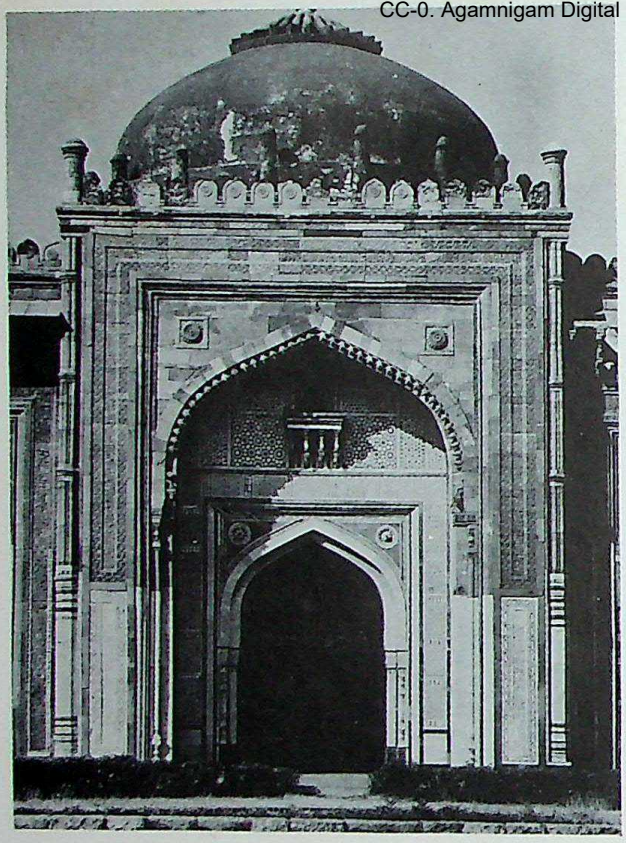


Plate 257. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, detail: central entrance.

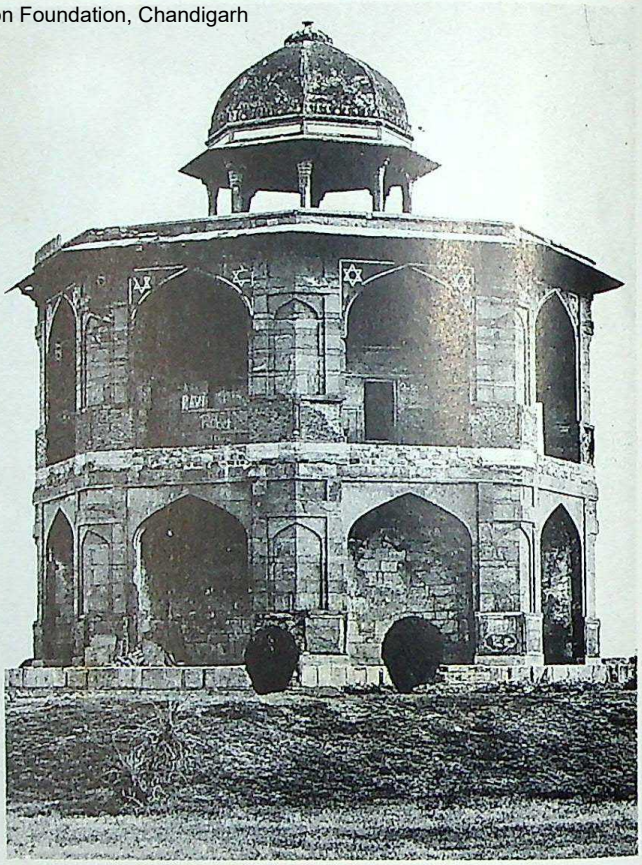
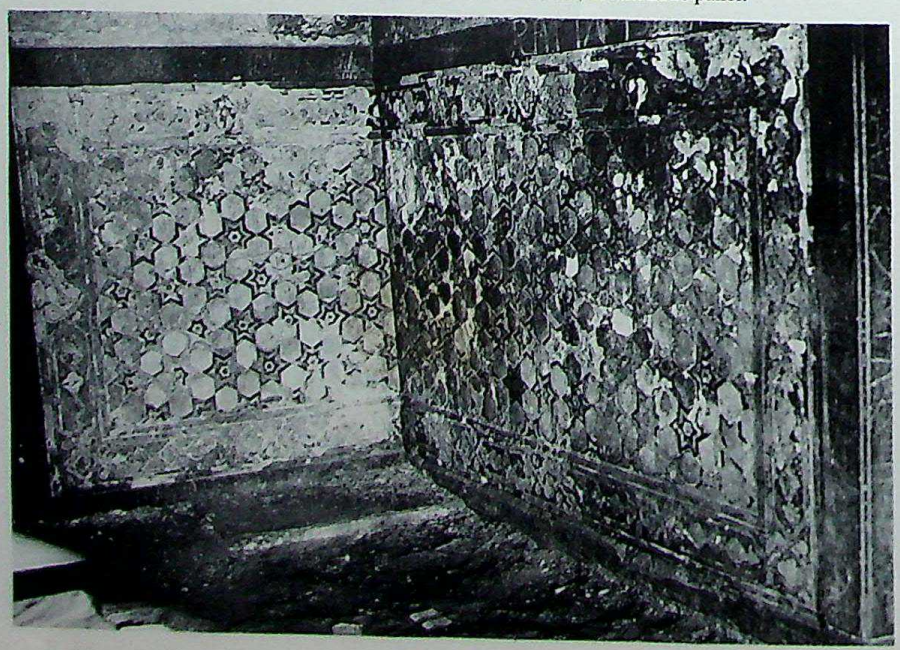


Plate 258. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Sher Mandal. *c.* 1540.

Plate 259. New Delhi. Purāṇā Qil'a. Sher Mandal, detail: dado panel.



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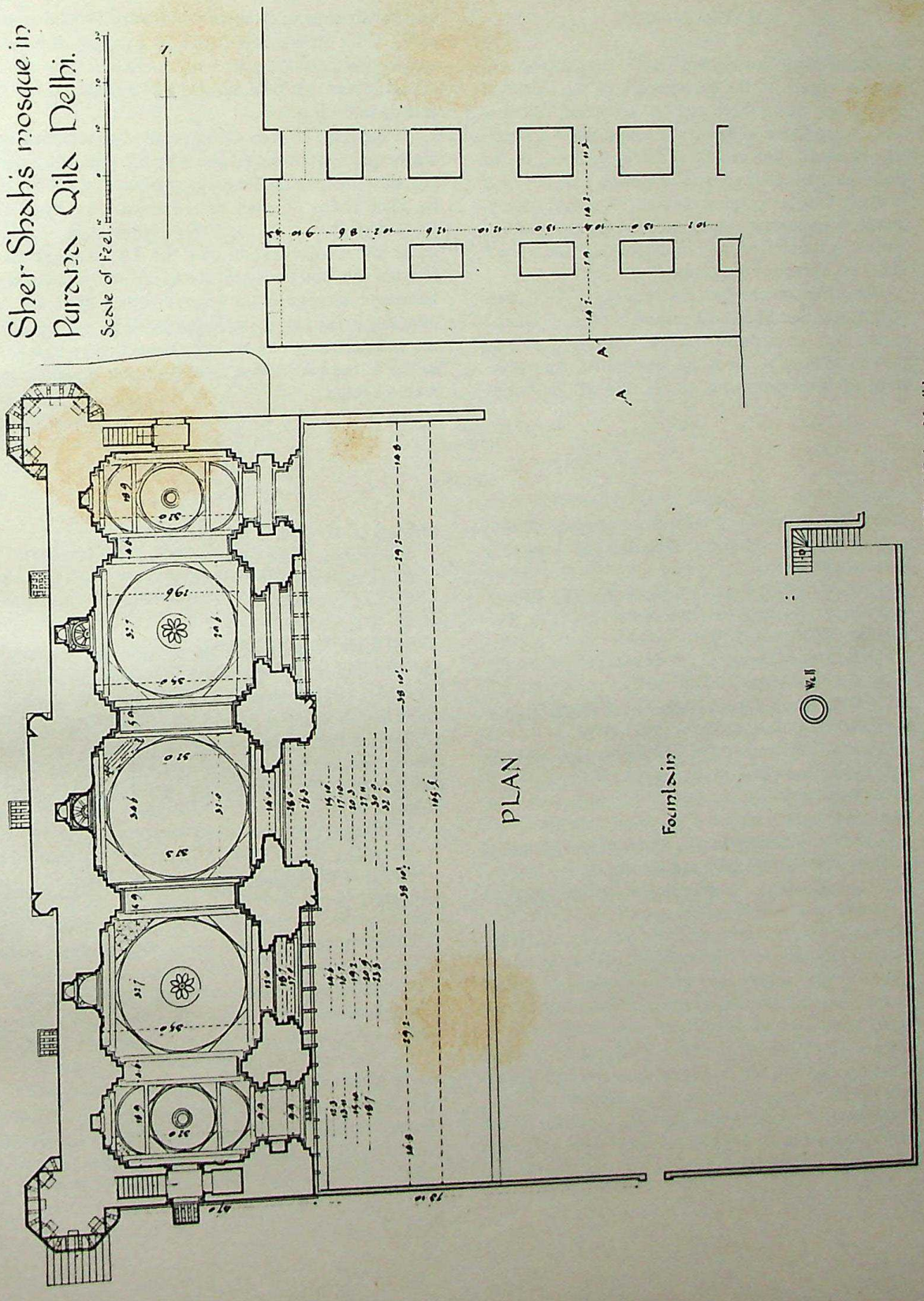

Figure 2. New Delhi. Purānā Qil'a. Plan of Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid.

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OBSERVATIONS

Evidence from the Purānā Quil'a thus shows that even in regard to the monuments of the medieval period, for which there are well recorded histories, total dependence on literary data is at times misleading. Similarly, the structural evidence alone, or for that matter the epigraphical data alone, may not yield in every case a complete picture. The best course, therefore, would be to combine both the categories of testimony for arriving at secure conclusions in respect of the art history of the period.

The other point which emerges out of the discussions is whether Sher Shāh, who has been acclaimed as one of great medieval builders, was really so. The answer perhaps is not in the affirmative. An assessment of his monuments shows that all his major structural projects, although impressive, lacked originality. Sher Shāh's importance as a patron of architecture has perhaps been over-emphasized by most art historians, yet he doubtless was a great patron of artistic traditions.

It appears that the development of architecture in Delhi was not hampered much by the political changes, be it the exile of Humāyun or occupation of Delhi by Sher Shāh, or even the revival of the Mughal authority. It was, in fact, the introduction of new ideas and art elements during the first phase of the Mughal rule and the survival and growth of the early Sultanate structural tradition together with intermingling of the native and imported styles throughout the second quarter of the sixteenth century that resulted in the production of magnificent buildings in Akbar's reign.

NOTES

1. Carr Stephen, *The Archaeology and Monumental Remains of Delhi*, Calcutta and Ludhiana 1876, p. 185.
2. H.M. Elliot (ed. John Dowson), *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians*, Vol. IV, London 1872, pp. 476–77.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 429.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 498n.
5. J.A. Page, *List of Muhammadan and Hindu Monuments*, Vol. II, Calcutta 1918, p. 86.
6. Y.D. Sharma, *Delhi and its Neighbourhood*, 2nd edition, New Delhi 1974, p. 123.
7. Page, p. 94.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 97
9. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period)*, Bombay 1968, Plate CIX, Fig. 2.
10. G. Yazdani, "Narnaul and its Buildings," *JASB*, Vol. III (1907), pp. 584–86.
11. Brown, Plate CV.
12. Elliot, p. 419.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 477.
14. Page, p. 98.
15. J.Ph. Vogel was of the opinion that northern and southern side-wings (bays) of the mosque were of later date, but it is difficult to accept his view as these wings are an integral part of the original fabric and along with the corner-towers of the back and the gallery running behind them provide essential support to the superstructure. *Cf. A.S.I.A.R.*, 1902–3, Calcutta 1904, p. 78.
16. Vogel, p. 79.
17. Elliot, p. 477.
18. H.B.W. Garrick, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII, Calcutta 1887, p. 28.

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49

The Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr: Epigraphs and Implications

CATHERINE B. ASHER

I

THE MONUMENTAL tomb of elaborately carved multicolored stone at Narnaul, in Mahendragarh District, Haryana was built by one of India's greatest sulṭāns, Sher Shāh Sūr (1538–45), for his grandfather, Ibrāhīm Sūr (Plate 260). That is evident from two Persian inscriptions on the building. Other Persian inscriptions on the mausoleum provide additional historical information, while the building's Arabic inscriptions are all of a religious nature. All these inscriptions, some of them recorded here for the first time, when properly interpreted, yield important insights into the mausoleum and its patron.

On each projection of the continuous battlement crowning the exterior of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb is a roundel carved with the name of Allāh or the Muslim Creed, which translates, "There is no God but Allāh." Similar inscribed battlements are seen on a few other tombs of this period, for example, on the tomb of Imām Ẓāmin dated to 1537/38, situated near the Quṭb *Minār* in Delhi.[1] But their location on the lower levels of the tomb, easily visible to the viewer, is most unusual. The prominence of these pious phrases thus endows this mausoleum with an air of sanctity.

The Arabic inscriptions[2] of the tomb's interior, all located on the three *miḥrābs*, indicate the lack of a coherently coordinated plan, one of the tomb's problematic features (Plate 261). On the central and most prominent *miḥrāb*, the Throne Verse (2:255) is carved on a horizontal panel above the arched niche. Appearing on a recessed flat panel below this arched niche are verses 18 and 19 of Sūra 3, the Family of 'Imrān. In addition, there are several medallions bearing standard pious invocations. On a horizontal panel on the northern *miḥrāb* (Plate 262), corresponding to the above-mentioned one on the central *miḥrāb*, verses 18 and 19 are carved again, a repetition unique to this monument. Below these two *āyats* is the Bismillāh, and also appearing on this *miḥrāb* are two small roundels inscribed with short religious formulae. The southern *miḥrāb*, unlike the other two, bears no Qur'ānic *āyats*, but only medallions with stock pious phrases. As the slab beneath the concave ribbed niche is damaged, it is possible that this small area bore Qur'ānic verses; however, the horizontal panel of this *miḥrāb* is not embellished with epigraphs but with a series of small niches.

The Throne Verse, appropriate for funerary architecture, is the Qur'ānic verse most frequently found in tombs throughout the Islamic world.[3] Hence, its appearance on the central *miḥrāb* of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb is hardly surprising. Likewise, verse 18 from the Family of 'Imrān appears on a large number of tombs constructed in the Delhi region during this period;[4] however, the following verse, 3:19, does not appear on any Indo-Islamic monument whose Qur'ānic epigraphs have been published systematically. This verse is essentially a statement of the supremacy of Islam, a proclamation commonly

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placed on Indo-Islamic tombs,[5] and fits well with the theme of the other *āyats* found on Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb.

In spite of the rather commonplace nature of the Arabic inscriptions on this tomb's interior, they show none of the unity in execution so common to the *qiblah* walls of other tombs. The inscriptions on the *miḥrābs* are carved in entirely different hands and styles. For example, the calligraphy on the horizontal panel of the central *miḥrāb* is rendered in a clear bold *Naskh* while that on the northern *miḥrāb* is executed in an ornate elongated *Naskh*. This vast disparity of the calligraphic styles coupled with the repetitive use of 3:18–19, indicates that little attention was paid to the overall organization of details, perhaps resulting from the tomb's hasty completion. Still other features indicate the tomb's disorganized interior. For example, horizontal panels of Qur'ānic *āyats* are placed above the concave niches on the central and northern *miḥrāb*, while the corresponding panel on the southern *miḥrāb* has no epigraph but is embellished with a series of concave niches. Similarly, of the two small niches situated between the central and flanking *miḥrābs*, one contains carved geometric patterns, while the other does not. Thus, a visual imbalance is created on the *qiblah* wall, an area where there is usually a high degree of symmetry. Admittedly, these are minor points, but they show that little attention was paid to the execution of minute details on the interior. This is a feature of considerable surprise in light of the patron's reputed interest in architecture.

The tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr is unusually rich in Persian inscriptions, all of which are located on the mausoleum's exterior. These Persian epigraphs can be divided into two groups, those in an elaborately intertwined *Naskh* at the top of the eastern facade and those written in *Nasta'līq*, located over the entrance on the east and over the central *jālī* window of the north and south sides. Situated at the top of the east facade, aligned directly above the sole entrance into the tomb, is the later group (Plate 263). This is placed in three rectangular panels of red sandstone each carved with a *bait* of Persian verse. While severe erosion of the stone due to water seepage from above has effaced some of the characters in the second and third panels, it is still possible to decipher the entire text.[6]

Panel One (Plate 264)

Gunbadī madrasa ki rif'at-i khwūd
burd az qubba-i falak bīrūn

Panel Two (Plate 265)

Dar sanh nuh ṣad o chachil bā nuh
Shud murattab 'Imārat-i mauzūn

Panel Three (Plate 266)

Var bikhwahī ḥurūf tārīkh ash
U Kashad ser bigunbad-i gardūn

A domed *madrasa* whose glory is carried
Beyond the dome of the heavens
In the year nine-hundred-forty-nine
This harmonious building was constructed
And if you want its chronogram, then say
It raises its head to the celestial orb.

This hitherto unnoticed inscription contains two pieces of information vital to a complete understanding of the tomb. The first, most obviously, is the date of the tomb's construction 949 A.H. = 1542/43 A.D. The date is actually given twice in this inscription. Initially the words nine hundred forty-nine are spelled out in the second *bait*, and the date is further repeated as a chronogram in the third *bait*. Here the complete numerical value of the last line equals 949 according to the *abjad* system of numeration.[7] Thus while the final nine of *bait* two only can be read with difficulty, the date of 949 determined by the chronogram underscores the accuracy of this reading.

Second, this inscription shows that this tomb was also intended to be a *madrasa*, a point not previously recognized. In 1884, Garrick recorded his observation that this mausoleum was used as a *madrasa*, but nothing in his report gave reason to believe that this function dated to the 16th century.[8] Only with the discovery of the word *madrasa* in the inscription is it evident that it was Sher Shāh's intention for the mausoleum to double as an institution of religious instruction.[9]

Garrick also states that the tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr was built by a resident of the village Simla, and that the tomb bears the date of 1520.[10] Yazdani, however, states that Garrick made several errors, for example, confusing Sher Shāh the ruler with another unknown Sher Shāh who came from a village called Simla.[11] The confusion in this case may be Yazdani's, for K.R. Qanungo has argued convincingly that Sher Shāh was born in his grandfather's *jāgīr*, a small village named Simla in the *pargana* of Narnaul.[12] Garrick did err in the tomb's date, now known from this inscription to be 1542/43.

The remaining Persian inscriptions are situated on

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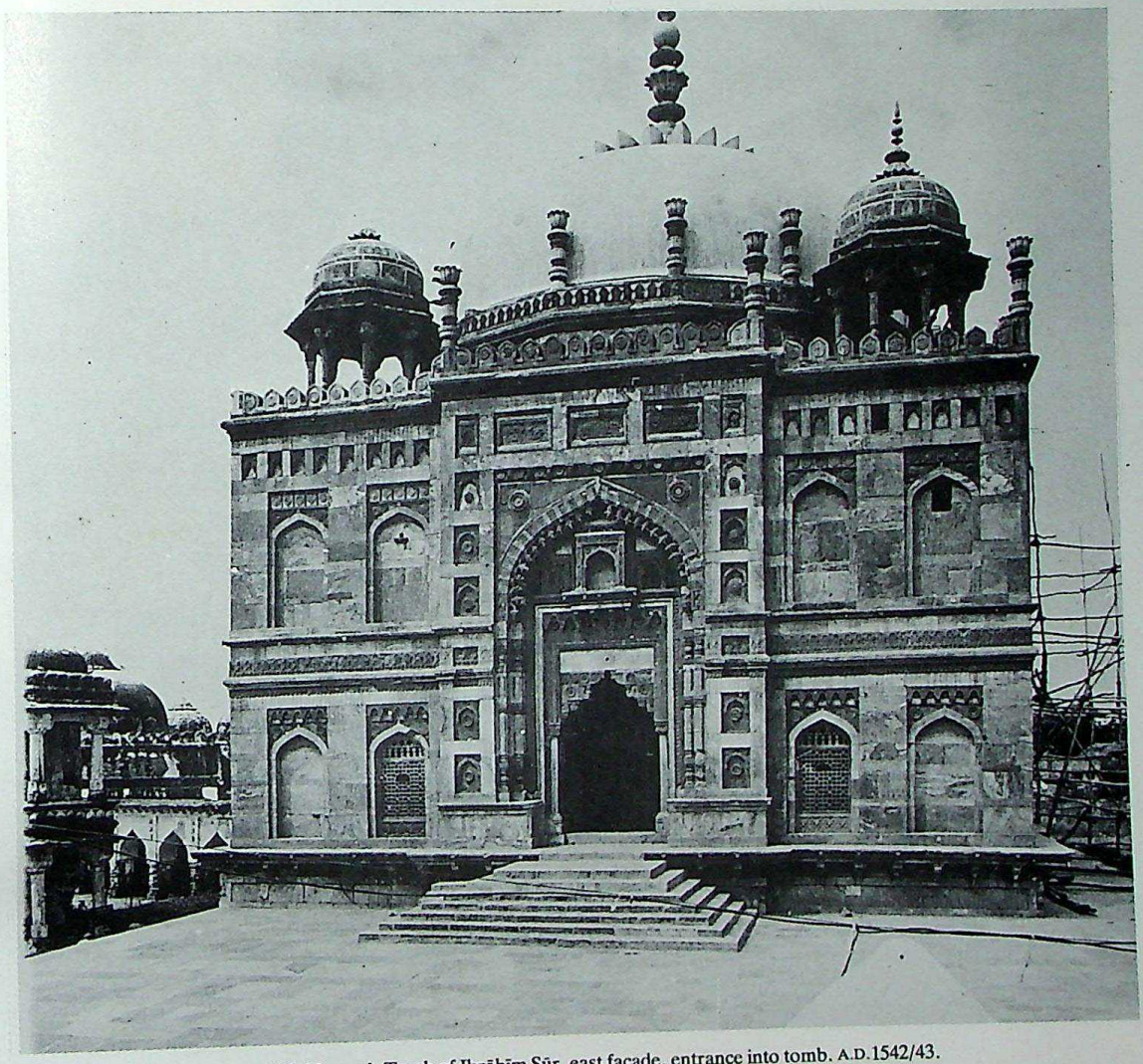

Plate 260. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, east facade, entrance into tomb. A.D.1542/43.

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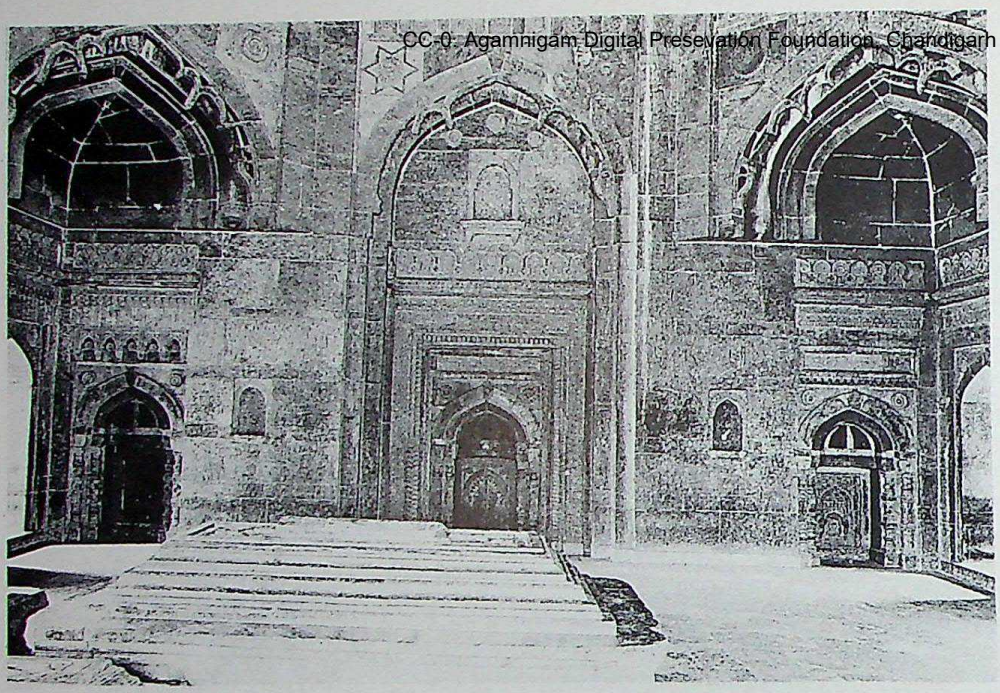

Plate 261. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, interior, west wall.

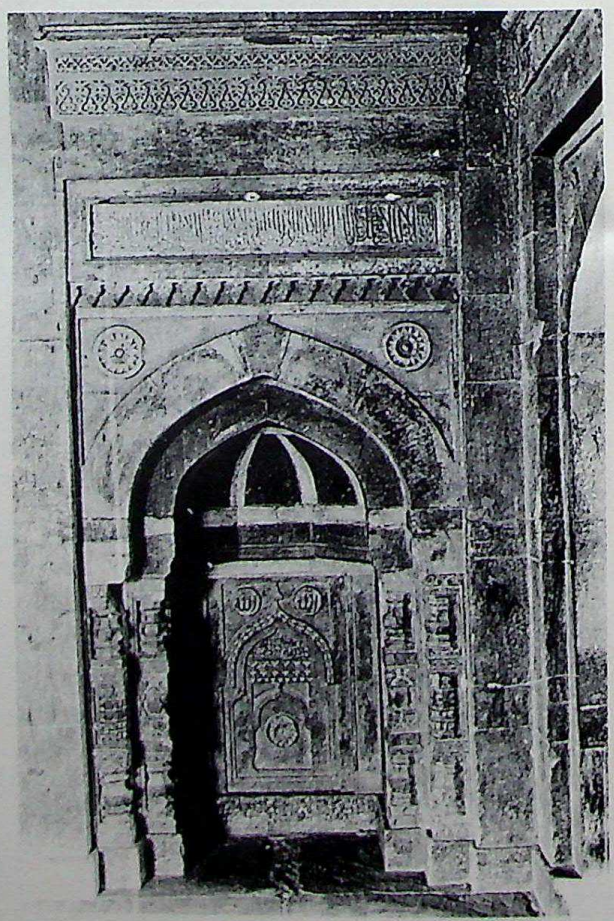

Plate 262. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, northern *miḥrāb*.

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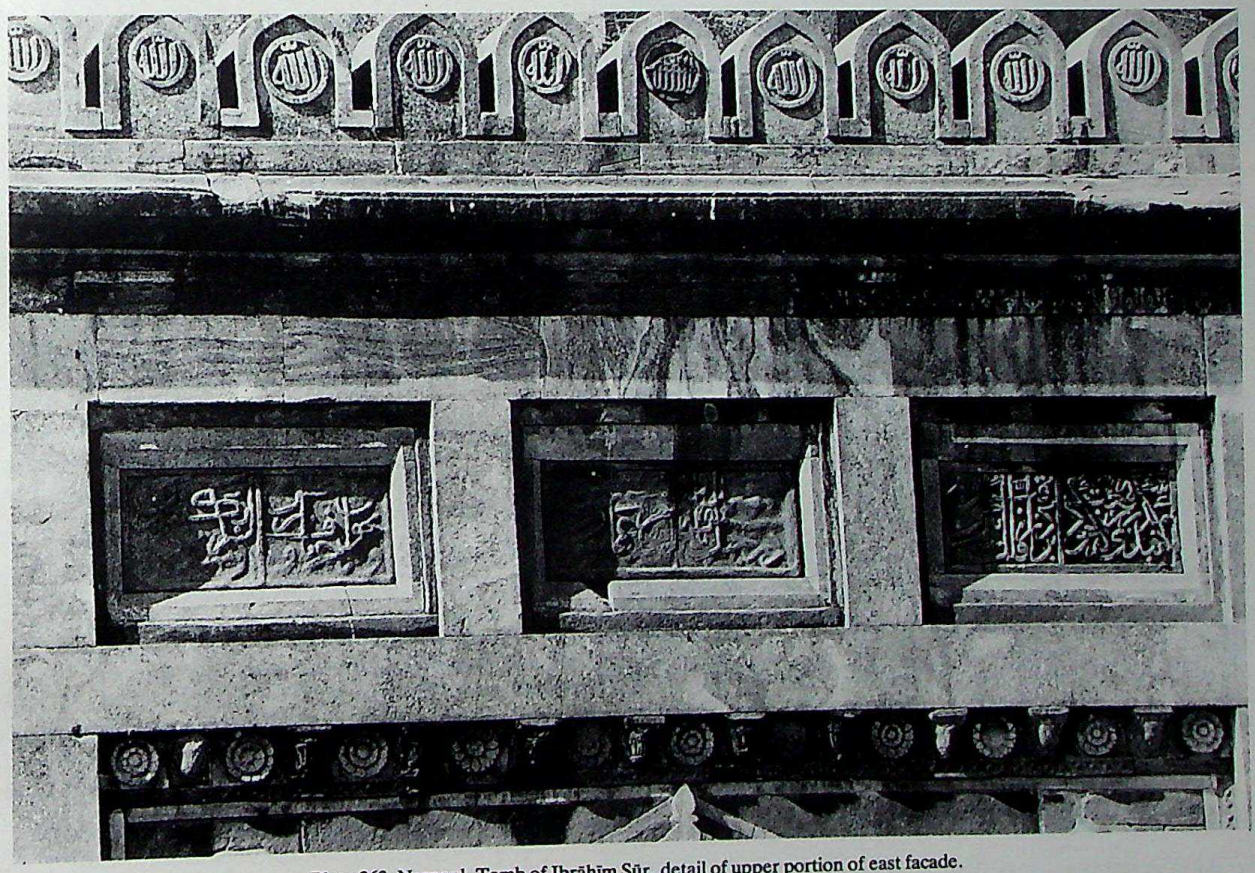

Plate 263. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, detail of upper portion of east facade.

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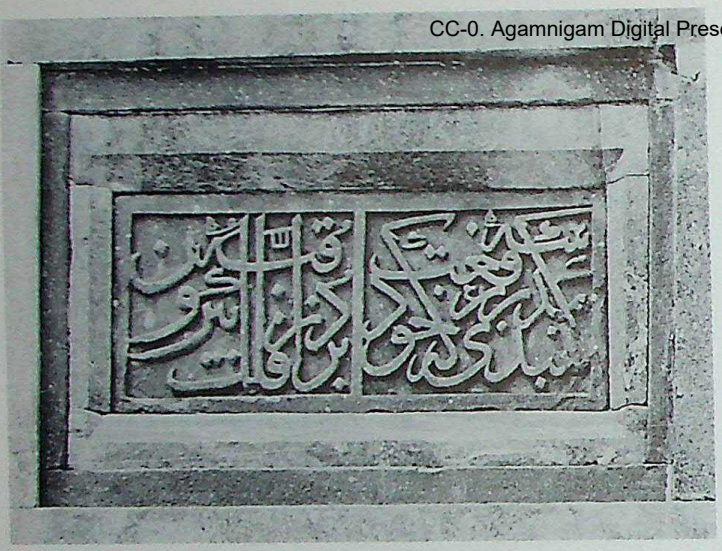

Plate 264. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, upper portion of the east exterior facade, panel containing the first *bait*.

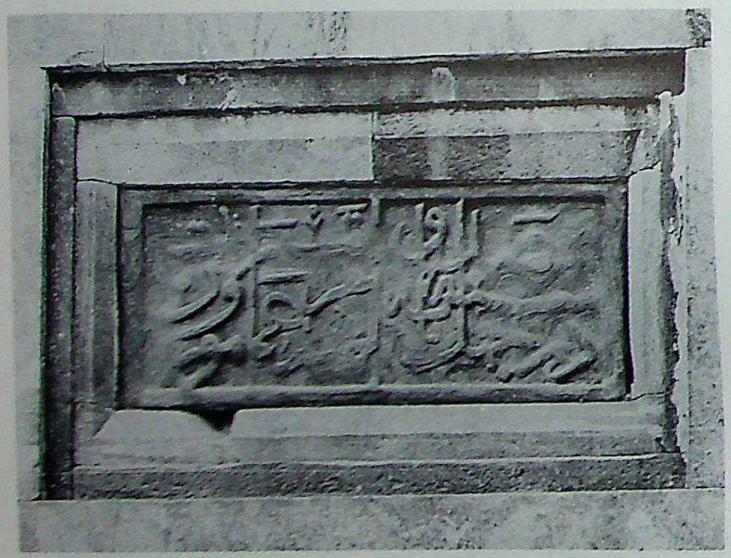

Plate 265. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, upper portion of the east exterior facade, panel containing the second *bait*.

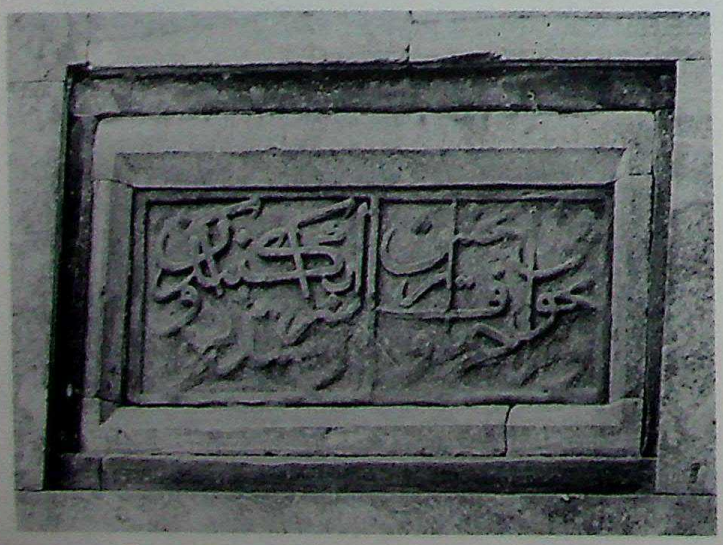

Plate 266. Narnaul. Tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, upper portion of the east exterior facade, panel containing the third *bait*.

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the east, north and south facades immediately over an entrance or *jālī*. All are executed in a clear bold *Nasta'līq* that would be immediately discernible to the literate. The inscription over the eastern portal, the only entrance into the mausoleum, has been translated accurately as follows:[13]

> If anyone inquire of you who built this edifice, then tell him if you know the secret
> The emperor of the kingdom, Sher Sulṭān Ghāzī, has built this heaven-like dome.
> The king of kings, master of the seven empires, whose sword has surpassed the lightning of the world
> Farīd Ḥasan Sūr, son of Brāhīm (Ibrāhīm), gave orders for building a paradise over the tomb of his grandfather
> If you inquire of me who was the architect, then I will say Abū Bakr Kundī, son of Shaikh Aḥmad Niyāzī
> His clan was Niyāzī and his tribe was Kundī, and on account of his pure descent he was honored.

Over the south *jālī*, there is a much shorter epigraph,[14] that essentially provides the same information in a vastly abbreviated form. It reads:

> Such a wonderful dome the king of the world erected over the tomb of his grandfather
> If people inquire of you about the name of the architect, then say Abū Bakr Kundī, son of Shaikh Ahmad.

Finally, the two *baits* over the north *jālī* give even less information, but significantly neither the patron nor the deceased are even mentioned in passing. The *baits* translate as follows:

> May God ever keep this big dome, which has thrown its shade over us like high heaven
> Abū Bakr Kundī, son of Shaikh Ahmad, was in charge of this building when it was being erected.

The inscriptions on the tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr provide a wealth of historical information. Thus consideration must be given to what this data reveals about the construction of the tomb and its patron. Together these two groups of Persian inscriptions indicate that the Sulṭān Sher Shāh Sūr erected this monumental mausoleum over his grandfather's grave in 1542/43. While Sher Shāh built the tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr only about two years after he attained the Delhi throne in 1540,[15] the establishment of this edifice marks a lapse of more than fifty years after his grandfather's death about 1488.[16]

The name of Sher Shāh's grandfather, who is buried inside of this tomb, is mentioned in only one of these inscriptions; he is alluded to in another. The patron, Sher Shāh, is also referred to by name in only one inscription and alluded to in a second one by the phrase, "king of the world." In contrast, the architect is mentioned by name and lineage in each of these three inscriptions. Although the architect of most extant Indo-Islamic edifices remains anonymous, the inclusion of the architect's name in epigraphs attached to structures is unique during this period.[17] But there is no precedent in earlier inscriptions for the architect to be mentioned more often than the patron or for his name and lineage to be given such prominent attention. Moreover, there is no other structure built under Sher Shāh's commission that bears the architect's name. So, then, what does the bold presence of the architect's name in three separate places suggest in terms of Sher Shāh's involvement with the construction of this monument? One answer based solely on the Persian epigraphs found on Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb might be that Sher Shāh simply gave the orders and money for the construction of this tomb but had no interest in the finished appearance of the monument. However, such an answer does not correspond with knowledge of Sher Shāh as a patron of monumental architecture.

II

Sher Shāh's bounty in the construction of architectural projects is referred to frequently in near-contemporary histories of this Sulṭān such as the *Tārīkh-i Sher Shāhī*, the *Tārīkh-i Dā'ūdī* and the *Muntakhab-al Tawārīkh*.[18] In such texts, Sher Shāh is credited with building a network of highways connecting the ends of his realm, *serā'ī* complexes for the welfare of travelers at regular intervals along these roads, forts throughout his kingdom for the protection of his subjects, and numerous mosques. In addition his generous patronage is known from inscribed monuments besides the Narnaul tomb. These include the tomb of Sher Shāh's father, Ḥasan Sūr at Sasarām in Rohtas District, Bihar and his own tomb in that same city.[19] Moreover, it is known that Sher Shāh continued to be remembered as a vigorous patron of architecture well into the 17th century.[20]

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In spite of their stylistic disparity, an issue addressed below, the Narnaul and Sasarām tombs were constructed almost concurrently. Sher Shāh's titles used in the tombs of Hasan Sūr and Sher Shāh Sūr in Sasarām indicate that these two multi-storied octagonal mausolea were built after 1538, when this ruler first assumed the title of Sulṭān in eastern India, two years before he became the Delhi Sulṭān. Moreover, historical and stylistic evidence indicates that these tombs were not commenced until 1541 at the earliest.[21] It is also apparent from epigraphical evidence that the tomb of Ḥasan Sūr was completed before Sher Shāh's death in 1545. Inscriptions on the *miḥrāb* in Sher Shāh's own mausoleum indicate that it was completed in 1545, during the reign of Islām Shāh Sūr, only three months after Sher Shāh was killed in the Battle of Kalinjar; it therefore, must have been virtually completed by the time of his death.[22] While building these two mausolea at Sasarām, Sher Shāh also raised the enormous square tomb over the grave of Ibrāhīm Sūr, his grandfather, in Narnaul.

One clue as to why Sher Shāh built the monumental tombs for his father and grandfather long after their death may be found in Ni'mat Allāh's *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī*. According to this chronicle, the dying Sher Shāh, lamenting that he had been unable to build a tomb for a predecessor from another Afghān dynasty, Ibrāhīm Lodī, at Panipat, uttered the following words:

> I have four desires, remaining unaccomplished... the last one is to have raised a tomb for Ibrāhīm Lodī with such architectural embellishments that friend and foe might render their tribute to applause ... and that my name might remain honoured upon the earth until the day of resurrection.[23]

What is particularly striking here is the emphasis on remembrance of the *patron's* name rather than the deceased's name. While this statement, found in a manuscript written about 30 years after Sher Shāh's demise, is probably spurious, the spirit behind these words appears to be an accurate reflection of at least one of his motivations in building three splendid tombs in Narnaul and Sasarām—that is, the desire for the lasting fame of the Sūrī dynasty. Indeed, special steps were taken to ensure this, for the name of the deceased as well as the patron, Sher Shāh, are inscribed on either the doorway, as in the Narnaul tomb, or on the *miḥrābs*, as in his father's tomb at Sasarām. This device is striking in contrast to standard practice. In the case of the majority of royal tombs in north India during the Sultanate period, the name of the main occupant is known only by tradition and not by any inscriptional evidence. For example, the tombs commonly identified as those of Iltutmish, Muḥammad Shāh Sayyid, Bahlūl Lodī and Sikandar Lodī are so identified by tradition alone, and not by any epigraphical evidence.

If this desire to ensure the memory of the Sūrī name was Sher Shāh's sole motivation, why did he build the tombs exclusively in the provincial cities of Narnaul and Sasarām? One large dynastic mausoleum in Delhi, the traditional burial site of most north Indian sulṭāns, would have seemed more prestigious. It was well within standard Islamic and Indo-Islamic tradition for one of the first sulṭāns of a line to establish a dynastic burial ground with elaborate mausolea. But usually this was done at a single site in or near the ruler's capital city. For example, the Tīmūrīs established the Gūr-i Amīr in Samarqand, and the Lodīs built mausolea in the Bāgh-i Jūd in Delhi.[24] In the case of Sher Shāh's family, a dynastic burial ground could have been established by shifting the graves of his father and grandfather; there was Indo-Islamic precedent for doing so.[25]

In any event, it was unprecedented for a ruler to erect such splendid tombs for such insignificant family members so long after their demise as did Sher Shāh. This monarch is unique in the annals of Indo-Islamic history in that he, on account of his own merit and cunning, rose from an obscure position to that of Sulṭān in a short period of time. His grandfather, who was a horse trader, died in about 1488, when Sher Shāh was approximately two years of age.[26] There is no textual or historical evidence to suggest that Sher Shāh had any strong attachment to his grandfather's memory. Sher Shāh's father, Ḥasan Sūr, died in about 1525,[27] yet his elaborate mausoleum was not constructed until approximately 15 years later. Moreover, it is well known from texts that tremendous animosity existed between Sher Shāh and his father, Ḥasan Sūr.[28] In light of the above, it is difficult to imagine that Sher Shāh ordered the construction of these extremely expensive monuments as a result of personal sentiment or even to perpetuate the name of his predecessors. A single monument would have sufficed for that.

One explanation for Sher Shāh's construction of tombs for his low-ranking predecessors may be found in the size and shape of these monuments.[29] Sher

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Shāh's spectacular tomb, set in the center of a lake, so suggestive of paradisical imagery, seems fitting for a sulṭān, but the mausolea of Ibrāhīm Sūr and Ḥasan Sūr seem dramatically impressive for their ranks. Ibrāhīm Sūr's square tomb appears to be a grander and more elaborate version of the type used for high ranking nobles of the Lodī period, yet his rank was only that of 40 horse. Ḥasan Sūr, who never attained a rank over 500 horse,[30] is buried in an octagonal tomb, a type that during the Sayyid and Lodī periods was reserved largely for princes and sulṭāns. Just as Ibrāhīm Sūr's square tomb was larger and more impressive than any other of its type, so too the octagonal tomb of Ḥasan Sūr was larger and more impressive than any of this two-storied variety.

Not only are the tombs of Ḥasan Sūr and Ibrāhīm Sūr magnified versions of the traditional types intended for princes and well-placed *amīrs*, but also certain epigraphical devices are used to endow these essentially secular structures with an elevated air, an air of sanctity. The exterior facade of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb at Narnaul, as noted in the first part of this paper, is embellished profusely with medallions containing pious formulae. Furthermore, this tomb is designated specifically as a *madrasa* and was used as such, thus giving this tomb a poignant and unusual religious aura. Likewise, a Persian inscription on the tomb of Ḥasan Sūr at Sasaram states that Sher Shāh built it at the request of a Shaikh Abū Sarwānī. Hence, the tomb was not simply built at the command of a sulṭān, but at the behest of a religious sage. The presence of a religious intervener, not only elevates the piety and hence status of the interred, but also heightens the status of the entire structure. With Ibrāhīm Sūr's mausoleum doubling as a religious institution and the use of pious inscriptions at both the tombs of Ibrāhīm Sūr and Ḥasan Sūr, it is almost as if Sher Shāh were bestowing religious respectability upon his forebearers, albeit posthumously. The result of doing so is identical to the result of erecting monumental tombs over the graves of low-ranking predecessors: It lends credibility to the Sūrī line and elevates its alleged status. Thus, in a sense, these tombs serve as a visual form of legitimization for the Sūrī name in much the same fashion that the Sāmānī and Ghaznavī dynasties, among others, produced fictitious genealogies to prove their royal roots.[31]

In addition to being a symbol of legitimacy, the Narnaul tomb, as well as the ones in Sasarām served another propagandistic purpose. Narnaul, the site of the tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, was an important Sūrī mint town[32] and also lay on a major trade route. Moreover, Ibrāhīm Sūr's mausoleum is adjacent to that of a much revered saint, Shaikh Muḥammad Tūrk Nārnaulī (d. 1137).[33] While the Shaikh's tomb was the site of pilgrimage, the magnificent multicolored and richly carved tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr, sitting high on a plinth and towering over the saint's small austere shrine commanded the landscape. Sasarām, the site of his father's tomb, as well as Sher Shāh's own tomb, today lies on the Grand Trunk Road, that is the modern highway that essentially follows the road Sher Shāh built from Sonargaon in Bengal to the Indus.[34] Hence, the lavish tombs built by Sher Shāh were situated in appropriate locales on well-traveled routes. Sher Shāh, having himself risen to power from the provinces, was extremely wary to keep a vigil over the events in the hinterlands. Thus, he placed imposing architectural monuments outside the capital, Delhi, to serve as constant reminders of Center's power. This was in keeping with Sher Shāh's administrative policies.[35]

III

It appears, then, that Sher Shāh's chief motivations in erecting the Narnaul and Sasarām tombs were largely political ones—that is, to ensure the lasting memory of his dynasty's name, to provide an embellished genealogy for the Sūrs, and to serve as constant reminders of the Center's power. It thus would follow that the appearance of the architecture commissioned by Sher Shāh would be of great importance to him. Why, then, was Abū Bakr Kundī, the architect of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb at Narnaul, allowed to inscribe his name three times upon the facade, whereas Sher Shāh's name appears but once?

One clue to the answer may be found in the fact that the Narnaul and Sasarām tombs, all constructed under Sher Shāh's patronage, were erected simultaneously but in radically different styles. The Sasarām tombs hark back to the older Lodī style, as exemplified by the tomb of Sikander Lodī in Delhi,[36] and the ornately carved multicolored stone surfaces of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb prefigure the complexity of much Akbarī architecture. The difference in styles, then, most likely results from different architects overseeing these projects. In other words, Sher Shāh was not a patron overly concerned with style or details, as was the later Mughal Jahāngīr, who is often consi-

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dered as a taste setter par excellence. Rather, the evidence suggests that Sher Shāh was concerned with the overall effect that his architecture made upon the viewer, but not in most cases with how the aesthetic or minor details were rendered. That, no doubt, was left to the architect. Thus, it appears most likely that Abū Bakr Kundī took the liberty of inscribing his name three times on the exterior of Ibrāhīm Sūr's tomb because he felt that his role as architect was important. On the other hand, the Sulṭān Sher Shāh Sūr probably never noticed this display of egotism on the part of Abū Bakr Kundī, for such minute details were not at all important to Sher Shāh. The apparent lack of unity in the placement of the inscriptions upon the three *miḥrābs* and other features on the *qibla* wall probably resulted from an absence of a carefully coordinated plan for the tomb's interior ornamentation, the exterior being far more important to the architect and patron. In this same vein, Sher Shāh appears to have taken little interest in the particular style of a monument as long as it was the biggest and most elaborate version of its type to date, thus by its overall appearance conveying the power of the Sūrī dynasty. This was certainly the case with the tomb of Ibrāhīm Sūr in Narnaul.

One final point helps to explain the prominence of Abū Bakr Kundī's name on the tomb's inscriptions. Just as Ibrāhīm Sūr descended from an insignificant Afghān family, Abu Bakr Kundī belonged to the Niyāzī tribe, which found no favor under the earlier Afghān dynasty, the Lodīs, but was raised to prominence under Sher Shāh. The elevation of the Niyāzī tribe is known from considerable literary references.[37] The Narnaul tomb, in a very real sense, serves as a visual manifestation of Ibrāhīm Sūr's elevated position. It did as well for the architect. He, however, relied upon written statements on the exterior facades of the tomb for his lasting fame, while Ibrāhīm Sūr attained it through the monument itself.

NOTES

1. H.H. Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi, Especially the Buildings Around the Kutb Minar*, London 1872, Plate XXIII.

2. These inscriptions are previously unpublished. I am indebted to Professor Sajida Alvi of the University of Minnesota for reading the Qur'ānic *ayats* on these *miḥrābs*.

3. James Dickie, "Allah and Eternity: Mosques, Madrasas and Tombs," in George Michell, ed., *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*, London, 1978, p. 45.

4. M.A. Husain, *A Record of All the Quranic and non Historical Epigraphs on the Protected Monuments in the Delhi Province*, No. 47 of Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, Calcutta, 1936, pp. 124–5.

5. Other common examples include 3:3 and 2:286. *See Ibid.*

6. It is with Professor S.M. Yunnis Jaffery's invaluable supervision and assistance that this inscription and chronogram have been deciphered. I am also most grateful to Dr. W.H. Siddiqi and Professor Iraj Bashiri for their patience and time in helping me read these panels.

7. Under the *abjad* system of numeration, *U* has a value of 7, *kashad* has a value of 324, *ser* has a value of 260, *bigundad* has a value of 78, and *gardūn* has a value of 280, thus totalling 949.

8. In Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 27.

9. I would like to thank Dr. W.H. Siddiqi for pointing out to me one other tomb in India specifically inscribed as a *madrasa*. This is the Pahlwānon ka Gumbad in Sarangpur, M.P., dated to 1493. *See*, *A.R.I.E.*, 1963–64, p. 129.

10. Cunningham, *A.S.R.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 27.

11. G. Yazdani, "Narnaul and its Buildings," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, N.S. Vol. III (1907), p. 584.

12. K.R. Qanungo, *Sher Shah and His Times*, Bombay 1965, pp. 7; 10. Abū al-Faẓl, *Akbar Nāma*, Vol. I, Translated by H. Beveridge, Reprint ed., Delhi 1972, p. 327.

13. The translation of the following three epigraphs is from Yazdani, "Narnaul," pp. 584–6. I have rendered *Kār farmā* as architect rather than superintendent.

14. W.H. Nicholls, "The Tomb of Ibrahim Shah at Narnaul in Patiala State," *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Northern Circle, 1905–06*, Lohore 1906, Plate IX.

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15. Badāyūnī, *Munthakhab-al Tawārīkh*, Translated and edited by George S.A. Ranking, reprint ed., Patna 1973, p. 466.

16. Abbās Khān Sarwānī, *Tārīkh-i Sher Shāhī*, Vol. II, Edited and translated by S.M. Imam al-Din, Dacca 1964, p. 121. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 21.

17. For an example *see* W.H. Siddiqi, "Lodi and Sur Inscriptions from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh," *Epigraphia Indica: Arabic and Persian Supplement, 1967* (1968), 30.

18. 'Abbās Khān, *Tarikh*, pp. 170–3. 'Abd Allah, "Tīīkh-i D'ūdī," in Vol IV of *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians,* edited and translated by H.M. Elliot and John Dowson, London 1872, p. 477. Badāyūnī, *Munthakhab,* pp. 472–3.

19. For all discussions of the historical epigraphs on Sher Shāh's and Hasan Sūr's tombs *see* M.H. Quraishi, "Inscriptions of Sher Shāh and Islām Shāh," *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica 1923–4,* pp. 27–8: Plates XIIIa, XII.

20. Ni'mat Allāh, "Tārīkh-i Khān Jahān Lodī." in Vol. V of *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians,* edited and translated by H.M. Elliot and John Dowson, London, 1873, p. 108.

21. Catherine B. Asher, "The Mausoleum of Sher Shāh Sūrī," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 3/4 (1977), p. 296.

22. Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *Corpus of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions of Bihar*, Patna, 1973, p. 143.

23. Ni'mat Allāh, p. 108. For the Persian text *see* Ni'mat Allāh. *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī*, Vol. I. Edited by S.M. Imam al-Din. Dacca 1960, p. 336.

24. 'Abd Allāh. *Tārīkh-i Dā'ūdī,* Edited by Abdur Rashid. Aligarh 1969, p. 21. Nimat Allāh, *Tārīkh-i Khān Jahānī*, p. 228. The text calls it Bagh-i Vajūd; however, it is generally agreed that the correct name is Jūd. For a discussion of this *see* Muhammad Sirāju-'l Islām. *The Lodī Phase of Indo-Islamic Architecture* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Faculty of Philosophy, Freie Universität, Berlin, 1960) p. 52.

25. R. Nath, "Chauburj: The Tomb of Babur at Agra," *Islamic Culture*, Vol. 48 (July, 1974), p. 151.

26. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 25.

27. 'Abbās Khān, *Tārīkh*, p. 31. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 68.

28. 'Abbās Khān, *Tārīkh*, pp. 8–9; 28.

29. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture: Islamic Period*, 5th ed., Bombay 1956, Plates LX, Figure b; LXI, Figure a.

30. 'Abbās Khān, *Tārīkh*, p. 8. Since ranks as high as 30,000 horse are recorded during this period, Ḥasan Sūr never belonged to the upper echelons of the nobility. I.H. Siddiqi, *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India,* Aligarh 1969, p. 37. In addition, there is reason to believe that Hasan Sūr's rank was not even 500 horse, for in inscriptions his name never has the title Khān affixed to it. For example *see* Ahmad, *Corpus*, p. 125.

31. Clifford Bosworth, *The Ghazanvids, Their Empire in Afghanistan And Iran, 994–1040*, Edinburgh 1963, pp. 39–40.

32. H. Nelson Wright, *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultāns of Delhi,* reprint ed., New Delhi. 1974, p. 384–5.

33. G. Yazdani, "Narnaul and Its Buildings, Continued," *J.A.S.B.*, N.S. Vol. III (1907), p. 693, terms him as Shāh Wilāyat; however, his name is given as Shaikh Muhammad Tūrk Nārnaulī in Muhammad Abdul Haqq Mohaddis Delhavī. *Akhbār al-Akhyar fī Asrār al-Abrār* (Reprint ed.), Deoband n.d., pp. 53–4.

34. 'Abbās Khān, *Tārīkh*, p. 170.

35. I.H. Siddiqi, "Lodi and Sur Inscriptions," pp. 62–3.

36. R. Nath, *History of Sultanate Architecture*, New Delhi 1978, Plate XCIV.

37. I.H. Siddiqi, " Lodi and Sur Inscriptions," p. 109.

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A Mughal Caravanserai Built and Inscribed by Amanat Khan, Calligrapher of the Taj Mahal

WAYNE E. BEGLEY

THE INSCRIPTIONS to be considered in this paper have a special relevance to the interconnections between the disciplines of epigraphy and art history. Though many epigraphs on Buddhist and Hindu monuments are artistically executed, rarely do they play an important aesthetic role in and of themselves. While the form of the engraved characters may be of interest to students of palaeography, most inscriptions are usually small in size and unobtrusively placed so as not to interfere with the architectural and sculptural decoration of the monuments. They are valuable because of the information they convey, not because of their beauty.

However, in the case of the large-scale panels of Arabic and Persian calligraphy found on certain Indian Islamic monuments, the epigraphs themselves can be regarded as works of art of the very highest order—to be appreciated as much for their form as for their meaning. In fact, on many monuments, calligraphy constitutes the single most important decorative element. Fully aware of their artistic merit, certain calligraphers often boldly added their signatures to their designs—sometimes even in larger letters than those used for the names of their patrons. Favored calligraphers, during the Mughal period frequently received lavish rewards and honorary titles from their patrons, and sometimes were themselves elevated to ranks of nobility.

During the first half of the seventeenth century the most fortunate calligrapher to achieve such success was Amanat Khan, the calligrapher of the Taj Mahal. Despite his fame during the reign of Shah Jahan, the full details of his life and career were assembled only recently.[1] Toward the end of his life, Amanat Khan built and inscribed a large *caravanserai* near Lahore, and presently just inside the Indian border, in Amritsar District. It is with the magnificent glazed-tile inscriptions on this monument that I propose to deal here. Not only do these inscriptions shed new light on Amanat Khan's literary and artistic skills, but also they help us to understand how he came to build and inscribe such a vast and impressive structure.

In order to put in perspective Amanat Khan's last great work, I will first briefly summarize some of the details of his life that I have been able to assemble from various contemporary Persian sources, and from the evidence of other surviving monuments inscribed by him.[2] As is learnt from these sources, Amanat Khan was the title awarded by Shah Jahan to the Persian scholar and calligrapher 'Abd al-Haqq of Shiraz, who had first come to India sometime around 1608, and who was ultimately elevated to a relatively high position at the Mughal court.[3] He seems to have achieved this position partly on his own merits, and partly as the result of the influence of his very powerful brother Afzal Khan,who was one of Shah Jahan's most trusted ministers, and who served him for a total

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of twenty-eight years, both before and after his accession to the throne.[4] There is some evidence to suggest that 'Abd al-Haqq was appointed to an official position in the imperial library shortly after he arrived in India.[5] At about the same time, he was appointed by the Emperor Jahangir to design, and perhaps also compose, the inscriptions on Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, which was completed in 1613 (see colophon in Plate 267).[6] After Shah Jahan's coronation in 1628, 'Abd al-Haqq seems to have continued in the imperial library, which was then at Agra. Apparently he also periodically performed certain diplomatic tasks, as in March 1631, when he escorted the Persian ambassador Muhammad 'Ali Beg to the court at Burhanpur.[7]

'Abd al-Haqq was still at Burhanpur when Mumtaz Mahal died there on 17 June 1631. Since he had designed the calligraphy for the tomb of Shah Jahan's grandfather, it seems that Amanat Khan had assumed the status of imperial calligrapher, at least in the eyes of Shah Jahan. In any event, it is known that the Emperor appointed him chief calligrapher of the Taj Mahal, probably about the same time architects were being summoned to Burhanpur to prepare plans for the mausoleum.[8] When Shah Jahan returned to Agra in June 1632, he awarded 'Abd al-Haqq the title of Amanat Khan, and also appointed him to a fairly high rank in the Mughal aristocracy.[9] Amanat Khan, who was then probably in his sixties, began to use his new title almost immediately, as is known from his dated seal in one of the manuscripts surviving from the imperial library.[10] Four years later, in 1636, he also designed the calligraphy for the small Madrasa Shahi mosque in Agra, on which he signed both his name 'Abd al-Haqq and his new title Amanat Khan (Plate 268).[11] During the same period, Amanat Khan's primary project was, of course, the calligraphy on the Taj Mahal, which was probably finished before the end of 1638, as is evident from the calligrapher's boldly signed colophon inside the mausoleum (Plate 269).[12] Just one year earlier, in December 1637, Shah Jahan had awarded Amanat Khan a ceremonial elephant in recognition of his services as chief calligrapher of the Taj.[13]

At about the same time that Amanat Khan was supervising the final stages of inlaying the calligraphy inside the tomb, Shah Jahan departed for Lahore, where the court was to be centered for the next four years. In January 1639, a few months after the royal entourage reached Lahore, Afzal Khan—Shah Jahan's trusted minister and the brother of Amanat Khan—died at the age of seventy.[14] A few days later, Amanat Khan and his two sons were received at court, as an expression of the high esteem which Shah Jahan felt for the deceased.[15] Apparently, the death of his brother grieved the great calligrapher deeply. According to the contemporary literary work *Chahar Chaman*, composed *c.* 1657 by the court poet Chandrabhan, Amanat Khan, "having resigned service and giving up office and rank, sought the nook of retirement and led an absolutely secluded life, and constructed an attractive *serai* at one-march's journey from Lahore and founded a village there, where he is presently buried."[16]

The "attractive serai" mentioned by Chandrabhan is undoubtedly the Serai Amanat Khan which is situated slightly more than 32 kilometers east of Lahore, on the old Mughal highway to Delhi (Figure 1). Unfortunately, this once magnificent monument has today fallen into a state of extreme disrepair, and is in urgent need of conservation. Despite its great historical importance and artistic merit, Serai Amanat Khan passed almost completely unnoticed by scholars until 1977, when I first visited it and photographed its previously unpublished inscriptions.[17] In December 1979, I again visited the site in the company of Dr. Z.A. Desai, Director of Arabic and Persian Epigraphy of the Archaeological Survey of India, who has very kindly furnished me with preliminary translations of the inscriptions on the *serai's* two monumental gateways.[18] Since Dr. Desai intends to publish the full text of the inscriptions, their contents will be only briefly dealt with here.

The previous neglect of Serai Amanat Khan is undoubtedly due to its present rather isolated location, for it lies off the modern Grand Trunk Road, which today passes through Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs, some nineteen kilometers to the northeast. The *serai* is almost 150 m square, but its once spacious courtyard is now crowded with village houses, many of which were built of bricks robbed from the *serai's* enclosure walls. Aside from its mosque, the *serai's* most remarkable architectural features are its two enormous projecting gateways, oriented east and west, through which the old Mughal highway to Lahore once passed (Plates 270, 271). Each gateway is more than 30 m wide, framed with octagonal towers. The facades are decorated with numerous panels of inlaid mosaic tile-work (*kashi-kari*)—a technique that is seldom found outside of the Punjab, where the

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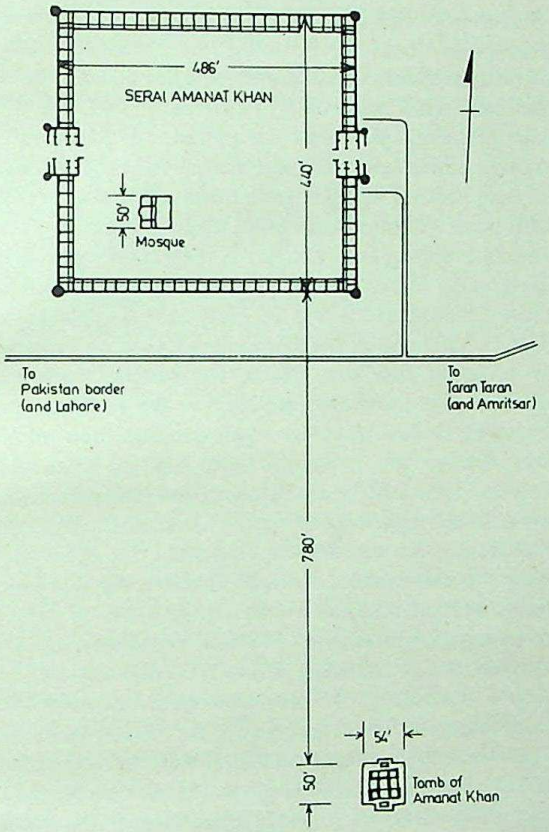

Figure 1. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan and adjacent tomb; sketch plan.

city of Lahore seems to have been the major center of manufacture.[19] The most prominent panel of tilework on each gateway is a continuous band of calligraphy framing the deeply recessed entrance archway. Boldly executed in dark blue *thuluth* script against a brilliant yellow background, the tile inscriptions clearly reveal the hand of a master calligrapher, namely Amanat Khan, who it turns out was the benefactor of the *serai*, as well as the author and executor of the calligraphic inscriptions.

Inscriptions on Mughal monuments typically have several complex connotations and levels of meaning, aside from their purely decorative function.[20] These may be conveniently grouped under three main rubrics: factual content, political implications, and religious or allegorical symbolism. Rather than translating the full text of the inscriptions—which are damaged and illegible in places—their contents will be briefly summarized under these three categories of meaning.

Though the texts of the inscriptions on both gateways contain essentially the same kinds of information, they differ in literary style. Thus the inscriptions on the better preserved west gateway are written in Persian prose, while those on the severely damaged east gateway originally consisted of eight Persian couplets, portions of only seven of which are still visible. The factual purpose of the inscriptions is to convey the information that the *serai* was built during the fourteenth year of Shah Jahan's reign, corresponding to 1050 Hijri (1640/41), and that it was a charitable endowment of Amanat Khan, who wrote the inscriptions with his own hand. On the east gateway, this information is contained in couplets four to six; while on the west gateway, it occurs toward the end of the inscription, beginning at the top left corner (Plate 272):

> I have founded this *serai* in this land for the comfort of God's creatures, and having completed it on this date, the fourteenth year of the accession of His August Majesty, corresponding to the Hijri year one-thousand-and-fifty, (I wrote) this inscription with my own hand by way of a remembrance ...

Since Shah Jahan's fourteenth year began in September of 1640, one can therefore date the completion of the *serai* somewhat more precisely to the period between 18 September 1640 and 11 April 1641—the last day of the Hijri year 1050. Thus the *serai* was completed within approximately two years after Amanat Khan retired from public office following the death of his brother Afzal Khan. It would be tempting to assume that the *serai* was intended as a kind of memorial to Amanat Khan's late brother, but in fact the inscriptions make no specific mention of him.[21]

Though he had retired from office, Amanat Khan obviously still understood the necessity of flattery of the Emperor, since more than half of each inscription is specifically devoted to eulogistic praise of Shah Jahan—described in the third couplet on the east gateway as "The World of generosity and magnanimity . . . Who is victorious with good fortune, knowledge and justice." Even more effusive praise of Shah Jahan is found in the opening section of the prose inscription on the west gateway, where he is characterized as:

> . . . the Defender of the code of the best of the Prophets, the Foundation-layer of the basis of

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> sovereignty, the Strengthener of the pillars of world-conquest, the Merciful and Just, the Generous and Perfect, the Lord of victory and conquest, the religion-cherishing Monarch . . . May Almighty God perpetuate his kingdom and sovereignty, and make available to the worlds his goodness and generosity.

Thus like so many of Shah Jahan's own monuments, the inscriptions serve in effect as propaganda statements for his reign, reinforcing the Emperor's own lofty image of himself and of the empire which he ruled. Viewed in this light, Amanat Khan seems to have constructed his *serai* at least partly out of political motivations—to impress the Emperor with a monument sufficiently magnificent to be worthy of his regime. Indeed, throughout the Mughal period, and especially during the reign of Shah Jahan, it was fairly common for officials and nobles to endow *serais* and other monuments along the imperial highway, both to impress the Emperor and to demonstrate their own fiscal uprightness in expending on public works some of the funds which, along with their very ranks of nobility, were granted to them at the pleasure of their sovereign.[22]

This raises the question of the source and exent of Amanat Khan's own wealth, since such a vast structure must have been very costly. From the Persian histories of Shah Jahan's reign, it is known that Amanat Khan attained the *mansab* rank of *Hazari*, or "Commander of One Thousand."[23] While this rank was far below that of Afzal Khan—who ultimately reached the extremely high rank of 7,000 *zat*—it was not without prestige. Of more than 850 listed nobles during Shah Jahan's reign, 428 nobles were *below* the rank of 1,000.[24] Thus Amanat Khan's own personal wealth, perhaps along with certain inheritances from the estate of his deceased brother, was sufficient to allow him to endow one of the most magnificent *serais* built during the entire reign of Shah Jahan.

Turning to the deeper levels of religious and allegorical meaning of Amanat Khan's calligraphy, it is apparent that these can be interpreted in a twofold manner. First there is the purely charitable motivation of the *serai*, which may, in Amanat Khan's case, have ultimately transcended its political motivation. For, as is well known, it was a long-standing Islamic custom for rulers and nobles to endow *serais*, wells, and other charitable constructions for the benefit of travelers—or in the words of Amanat Khan, "for the comfort of God's creatures." This pious practice is well-corroborated by the testimony of numerous European travelers, including the Portuguese friar Sebastien Manrique, who incidentally passed by Serai Amanat Khan sometime in February 1641, when it had probably just been completed.[25] In Manrique's words, *serais* were "sometimes erected at the expense of neighboring villages, sometimes at the cost of rich and powerful men, who erect them in order to keep their memory green or to satisfy their conscience, and large sums of money are left for such works which in their opinion are works of piety and acceptable to God."[26] Though *serais* themselves served no expressly religious function, during the Mughal period a mosque was invariably included in the architectural complex so that travelers might perform their religious observances. Inside the Serai Amanat Khan, the mosque (Plate 273) also bears calligraphic panels designed and signed by Amanat Khan, including one containing the well-known Hadith to the effect that whoever constructs a mosque for God, for him God will construct a mansion in Paradise.[27]

Aside from Amanat Khan's obvious religious motivations in founding a *serai* "for the comfort of God's creatures," he may also have intended the monument and its calligraphy to be read in another, somewhat more allegorical way as well. Though there are many other similar Mughal *serais* in the Punjab, including some with glazed-tile designs, the calligraphy on Serai Amanat Khan is totally unique. No other *serai* has such large and magnificent inscriptions. Though his calligraphy on the Taj Mahal will always be regarded as his supreme masterpiece, the inscriptions on Amanat Khan's own *serai* are ultimately more intensely personal, for in their totality of form and meaning they constitute a kind of final aesthetic testament of a great artist nearing the end of his life. Since Amanat Khan must have been close seventy years old when he decided to construct his *serai*, it is likely that he had already begun to prepare himself psychologically for his own approaching death, especially since he apparently was deeply disturbed by the death of his brother Afzal Khan.[28]

The exact date of Amanat Khan's death is unknown, although the official history of Shah Jahan's reign, the *Badshahnama*, states that he died in the Emperor's eighteenth year, that is, sometime between August 1644 and July 1645.[29] Since the *Chahar Chaman* indicates that Amanat Khan was buried at the site, his tomb can only be in the small, ruined one lying about 800 feet due south of the *serai's* east

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gateway (Plate 274). Although uninscribed and on the verge of total collapse, the tomb is stylistically of the period of Shah Jahan. It may have been started during Amanat Khan's lifetime, or else constructed after his death by one of his two sons—probably by Aqil Khan, who ultimately rose to an even higher rank in the Mughal nobility than his father.[30] The *Badshahnama* records that Shah Jahan halted at Serai Amanat Khan on 29 March 1645, on his way to Lahore from Agra, where the Taj Mahal had finally been completed just two years before.[31] Although no reason is mentioned in the text, one wonders whether the halt may have been prompted in part by the Emperor's desire to pay his last respects to the great calligrapher and devoted servant of the state.

Finally, one hopes that both the *serai* and tomb of Amanat Khan can eventually be restored and preserved. They should stand not only as a lasting tribute to his individual greatness as an artist, but also as an appropriate memorial to all those other, unknown scribes whose inscriptions have been treated in this volume, because they provide a key to the better understanding of India's rich artistic heritage.

NOTES

1. Wayne Begley, "Amanat Khan and the Calligraphy on the Taj Mahal," *Kunst des Orients*, Vol. XII (1978–79), pp. 5–60. *See* also my articles "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and A New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. LXI (1979), 7–37; "The Symbolic Role of Calligraphy on Three Imperial Mosques of Shah Jahan," in Joanna Williams, ed., *Kalādarśana: American Studies in the Art of India*, New Delhi 1980; "Four Mughal Caravanserais Built during the Reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan," in the inaugural issue of *Muqarnas*: *An Annal of Ideas and Information on Islamic Art*, ed. Oleg Grabar, Vol. I (1981).

2. The most important literary source is the official history of Shah Jahan's reign, *The Badshah Nama by Abd al-Hamid Lahawri*, ed. Kabir al-Din Ahmad and Abd al-Rahim, 2 vols., Bibliotheca Indica Calcutta 1867–68: See also *Amal-i-Salih, or Shah Jahan Nama of Muhammad Salih Kambo,* ed. Ghulam Yazdani, 3 vols. Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta 1912–1939. These will be cited as *Badshahnama* and *Shahjahannama*.

3. The estimated date of arrival is based on the presumption that 'Abd al-Haqq accompanied his brother Shukr Allah, later titled Afzal Khan. Both brothers were scholars and expert calligraphers, sons of Qasim, a well-known calligrapher of Shiraz. *See* the biography of Afzal Khan in H. Beveridge, transl., *The Maathir-ul-Umara*, 2 vols., Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta 1911–52, Vol. I, pp. 148–53; cf *Ma asir-i-Rahimi*, ed. M. Hidayat Husain, 3 vols., Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta 1910–31, Vol. III, pp. 27–30.

4. Afzal Khan first entered Shah Jahan's service in 1611, about three years after reaching India. He received his title from the Emperor Jahangir in 1615; *see* A. Rogers, transl., *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, repr., Delhi 1968, Vol. I, p. 273.

5. This is suggested by the presence of various seals of 'Abd al-Haqq on manuscripts belonging to the royal library (including the Jaipur *Razm-Nama*), indicating that he had officially inspected them; see my article "Amanat Khan," p. 24, Note 63.

6. It was in 1608 that Jahangir, disapproving of the work that had already been accomplished on Akbar's tomb, gave orders for certain changes to be made. It seems logical that orders for the gateway calligraphy would have been made at this time. The text and translation of the inscriptions are given in Edmund W. Smith, *Akbar's Tomb, Sikandarah Near Agra*, Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, Vol. XXXV, Allahabad, 1909, pp. 29–35. It is my inference from a careful reading of the inscriptions that they were both composed and calligraphed by 'Abd al-Haqq.

7. *Badshahnama*, Vol. I-A, pp. 365–67.

8. It should be noted that contemporary sources mention only the name of Amanat Khan in connection with the calligraphy on the Taj. Although various lists of artisans and calligraphers who supposedly worked on the tomb have been frequently published, in my view these are spurious, most likely fabricated in the late 18th or early 19th century; for a discussion of this problem, see M.A. Chaghtai, *Le Tadj Mahal d'Agra*, Bruxelles 1938, pp. 97 ff.

9. *Badshahnama*, Vol. I-A, p. 535.

10. The seal is dated in the Hijri year 1042, which began just a few weeks after Amanat Khan received

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his new title; the manuscript is in the British Library, Add. 16, 704.

11. *See* my article "Amanat Khan," pp. 26–29. The first scholar to refer to these inscriptions and to recognize that 'Abd al-Haqq and Amanat Khan were one and the same person, was Sa'id Ahmad Akbarabadi, in his book *Muraqqa'-i Akbarabad*, Agra 1931, p. 120.

12. The colophon is dated in the Hijri year 1048 (corresponds to 1638/39 A.D.) and also in the twelfth year of Shah Jahan's reign, which began on 10 October 1638. Since it is known that Amanat Khan was in Lahore from January of 1639, the calligraphy must have been completed before he left Agra.

13. *Badshahnama*, Vol. II, p. 8.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 131; the exact date of death was 17 January 1639 (not 19 December 1638, as cited in my article "Amanat Khan").

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 132–33.

16. I am grateful to Dr. Z.A. Desai for calling this reference to my attention, and also furnishing me with a translation of the relevant passage, which comes from the third section of Chandrabhan's work; *see* the recent critical edition by Muhammad Rafiq, *Chahar Chaman of Chandrabhan Brahman Lahawri*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Punjab University, 1970, pp. 114–116. Chandrabhan must have had direct personal knowledge of Amanat Khan's activities, since Afzal Khan had been his patron for many years.

17. Although the *serai* was listed by name in various editions of the Punjab district gazeteers, its inscriptions were somehow completely overlooked by scholars. A connection between the *serai* and the calligrapher of the Taj was proposed by M.A. Chaghtai (*Le Tadj Mahal d'Agra*, p. 130), but only on the basis of the monument's name, and perhaps the reference in the *Chahar Chaman*. Dr. Chaghtai informs me that he had never visited the *serai* and was unaware of its inscriptions.

18. I would also like to acknowledge the assistance with translations very kindly furnished by Professor C.M. Naim and Professor H. Moayyad, both of the University of Chicago.

19. For a detailed introduction to Indian tilework, *see* J.Ph. Vogel, *Tile-Mosaics of the Lahore Fort*, Calcutta 1920; cf. R. Nath, *Colour Decoration in Mughal Architecture*, Bombay 1970.

20. *See* W.E. Begley, "The Symbolic Role of Calligraphy on Three Imperial Mosques of Shah Jahan."

21. However, since the text of the inscription on the west gateway breaks off toward the end, it is possible that some mention of Afzal Khan might originally have existed. The word *yadgar*, here translated as "remembrance," can also mean "memorial"—suggesting the possibility that the *serai* may have been intended as a commemorative monument.

22. Some uninscribed *serais* in the Punjab have been attributed to various Mughal governors of the region, who may have endowed such monuments either on their own, or acting on behalf of the state and using state funds. During Jahangir's reign, numerous *serais* were founded by his Queen Nur Jahan; *see* my article "Four Mughal Caravanserais." In A.H. 1050, the very year the Serai Amanat Khan was completed, the Princess Jahanara endowed another *serai* at Peshawar; *see* S.M. Jaffar, "Serai Jahanabad at Peshawar," *Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission,* Vol. XX, 1943, pp. 51–53.

23. *Badshahnama*, Vol. I-A, p. 535.

24. *See* the listing of Mughal nobility at the end of the *Shahjahannama*, Vol. III.

25. See *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique*, transl. C.E. Luard, London 1927, p. 184. Although Manrique notes that the *serais* along this route were "handsome and particularly well built," he complains that "we could not find room to stop owing to the stream of passengers of all sorts and conditions, who were at that time following those roads, owing to the presence of the court at Lahore."

26. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

27. This Hadith is found over the central *miḥrāb* inside the mosque; another Hadith stating that prayer is a pillar of faith is inscribed over the left *miḥrāb* (the panel over the right *miḥrāb* is destroyed). On the facade of the mosque, over and around all three arches, glazed-tile inscriptions give the Qur'ānic passage Sura 85, verses 1–22, followed by a now damaged colophon that originally read: "Written by Amanat Khan Shirazi, the year 1050."

28. Since many Islamic religious writings speak of life itself as a journey, a *serai* seems a specially appropriate kind of charitable monument to endow for someone who was himself about to reach the end of the journey. Also, since gateways figure prominently in mystical writings, it is possible that, in some esoteric way, the Serai Amanat Khan's magnificent gateways with their elaborate floral tile patterns may have been intended as reminders of the gateways that ulti-

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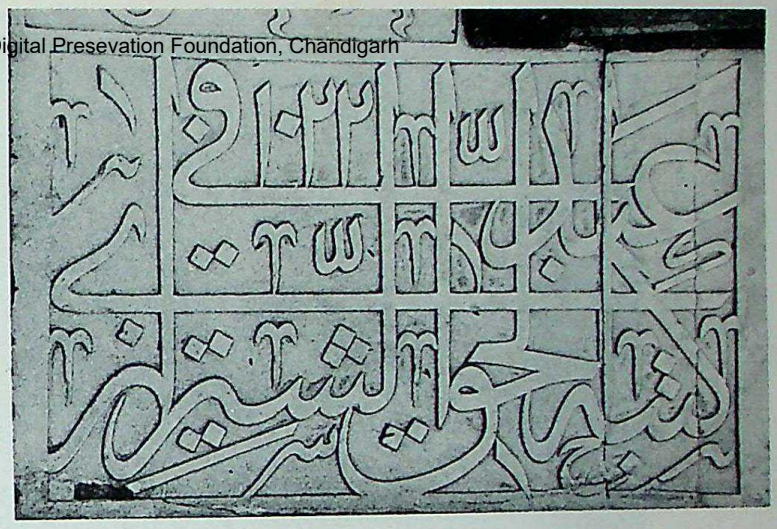

Plate 267. Sikandra. Akbar's tomb. Inscription on gateway: "Written by 'Abd al-Haqq al-Shirazi." Dated A.H. 1022/A.D. 1613.

Plate 268. Agra. Madrasa Shahi mosque. Inscription on *mihrāb*: "Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, called Amanat Khan." Dated A.H. 1045/A.D. 1636.

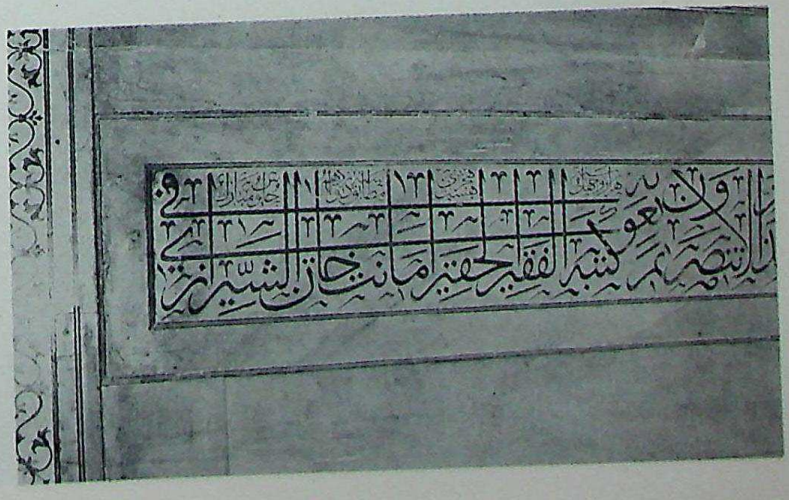

Plate 269. Agra. Taj Mahal. Interior inscription: "Written by Amanat Khan al-Shirazi." Dated in twelfth regnal year of Shah Jahan, A.H. 1048/A.D. 1636.

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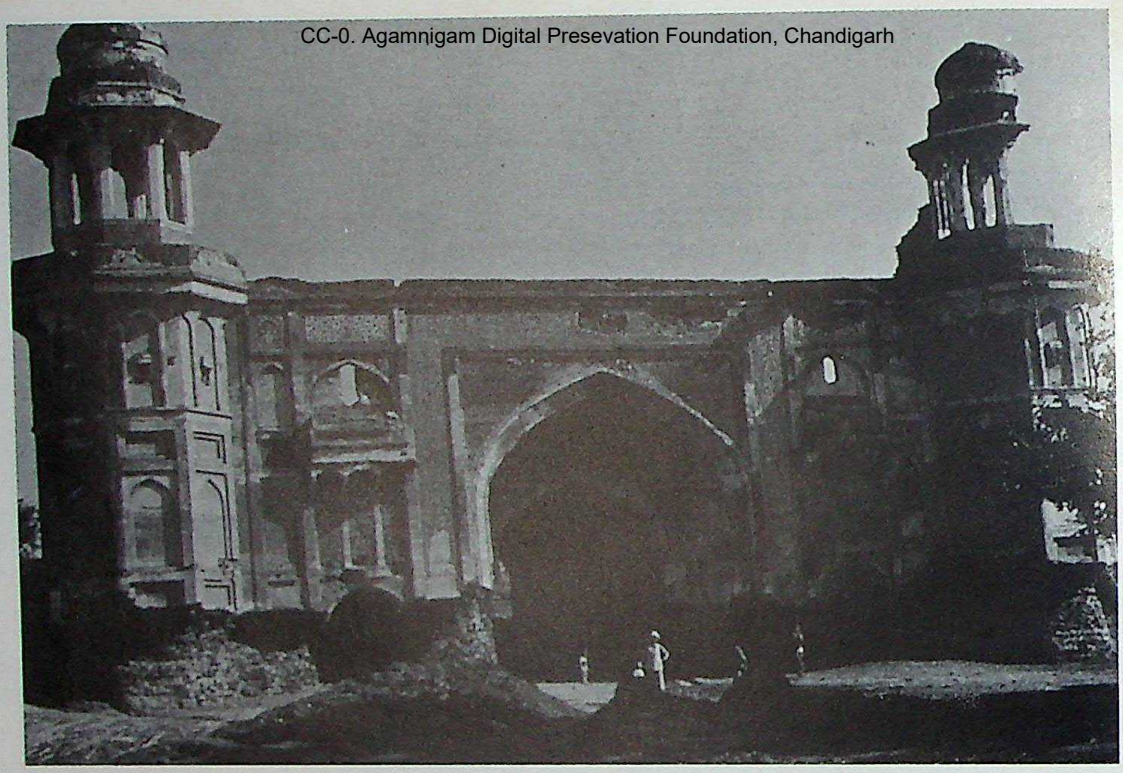

Plate 270. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan, west gateway.

Plate 271. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan, dedication inscription on west gateway.

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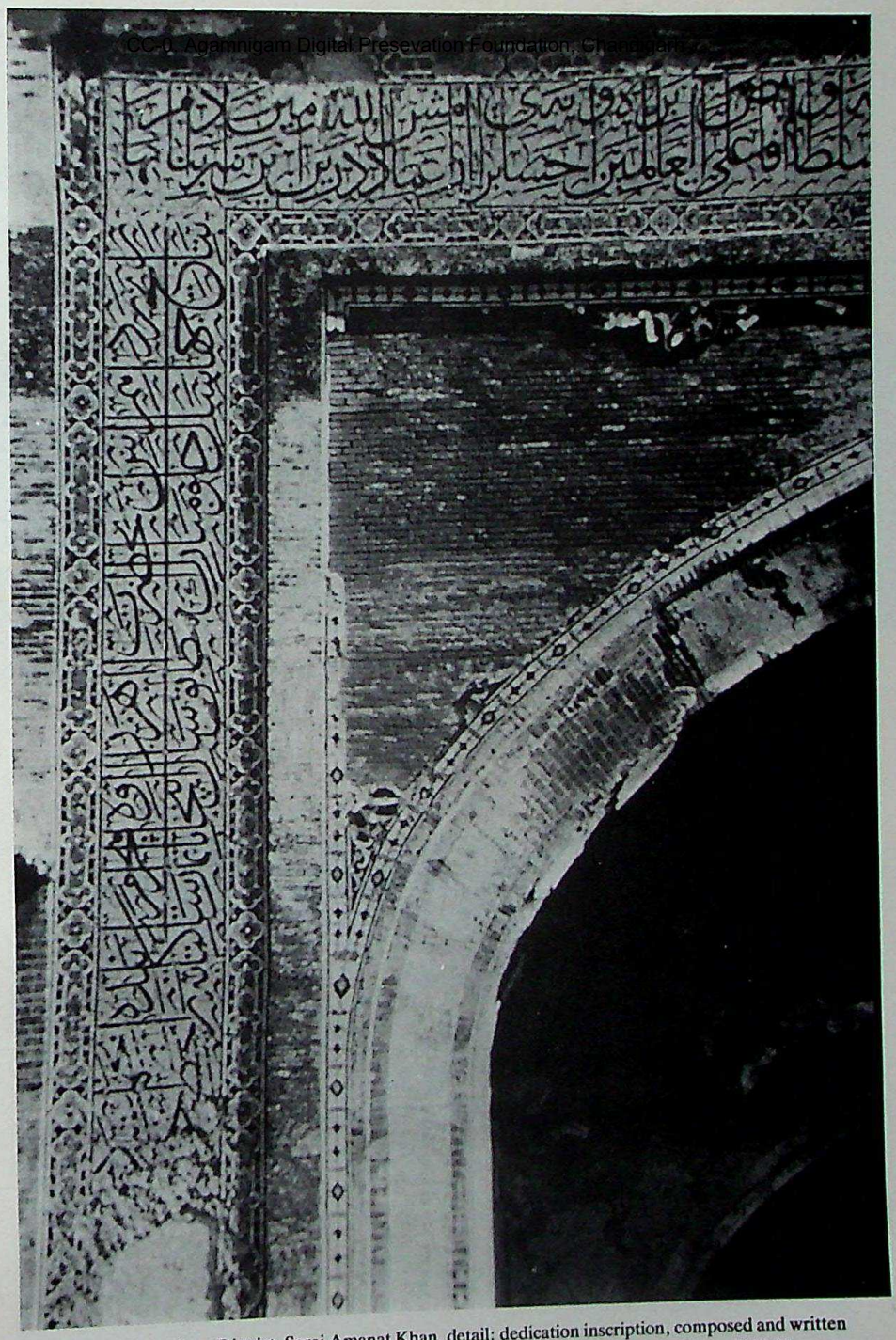

Plate 272. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan, detail: dedication inscription, composed and written by Amanat Khan; dated in fourteenth regnal year of Shah Jahan, A.H. 1050/A.D. 1640–41.

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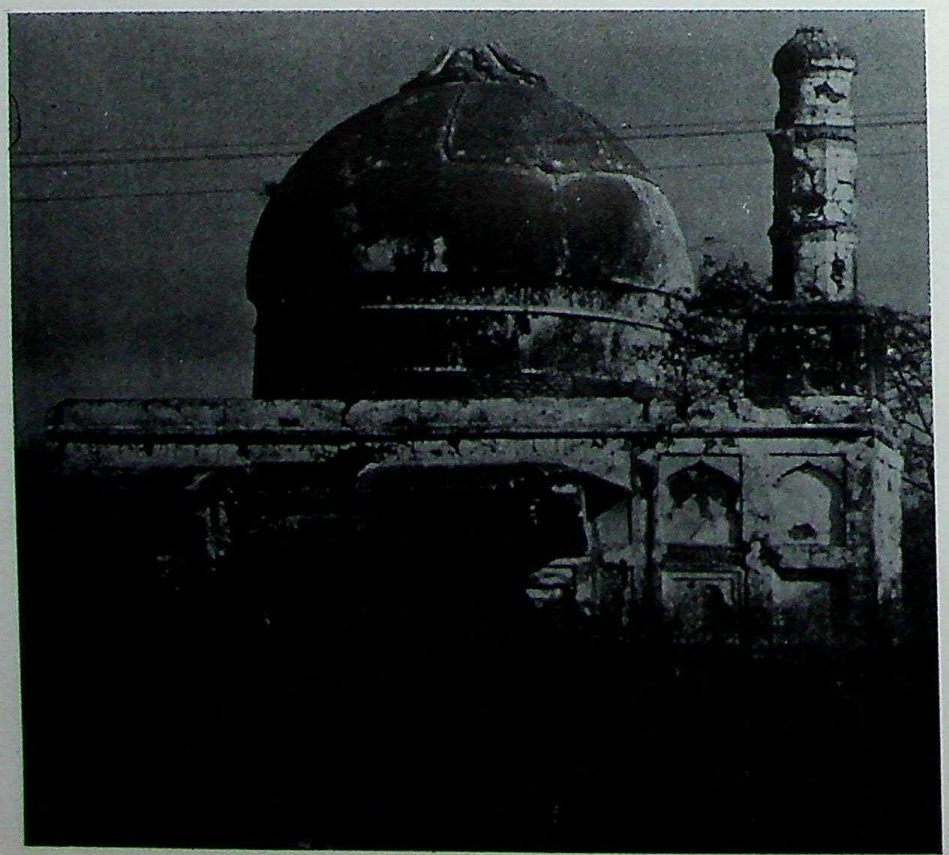
Plate 273. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan, mosque interior, inscribed by Amanat Khan. AH 1050/A.D. 1640-41.

Plate 274. Amritsar District. Serai Amanat Khan tomb. Probably built A.H. 1054/A.D. 1644.



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mately lead to the hereafter. If so, then a possible precedent for this kind of moral allegorizing might be the well-known inscription on the Buland Darwaza at Fatehpur Sikri, quoting the saying attributed to Jesus: "The world is a bridge, therefore pass over it and do not build upon it."

29. *Badshahnama*, Vol. II, p. 737; but cf. *Maathir-ul-Umara*, Vol. I, p. 260, where it is stated that Amanat Khan died in Shah Jahan's sixteenth year (I followed this latter source in my article "Amanat Khan," but the *Badshahnama* date is probably more reliable).

30. For Aqil Khan's biography, *see Maathir-ul-Umara*, Vol. I, pp. 259–61. According to the biography of Amanat Khan contained in the *Mir'at al-'Alam*, the calligrapher himself built the garden which formerly surrounded the tomb in which he is buried; *See* Sajida S. Alvi; ed., *Mir'at al-'Alam . . . of Muhammad Bakhtawar Khan*, 2 vols., Lahore 1979, Vol. 2, p. 487.

31. *Badshahnama*, Vol. II, p. 413. Earlier in the text (p. 322), it is stated that the Taj had "recently been completed" on the occasion of Shah Jahan's visit on 7 February 1643, to commemorate Mumtaz Mahal's twelfth death anniversary. As argued in my article "Amanat Khan" (pp. 17–19), I believe that the calligraphy on the Taj gateway, dated to 1057/1647, was completed by another unnamed calligrapher, after Amanat Khan's death.

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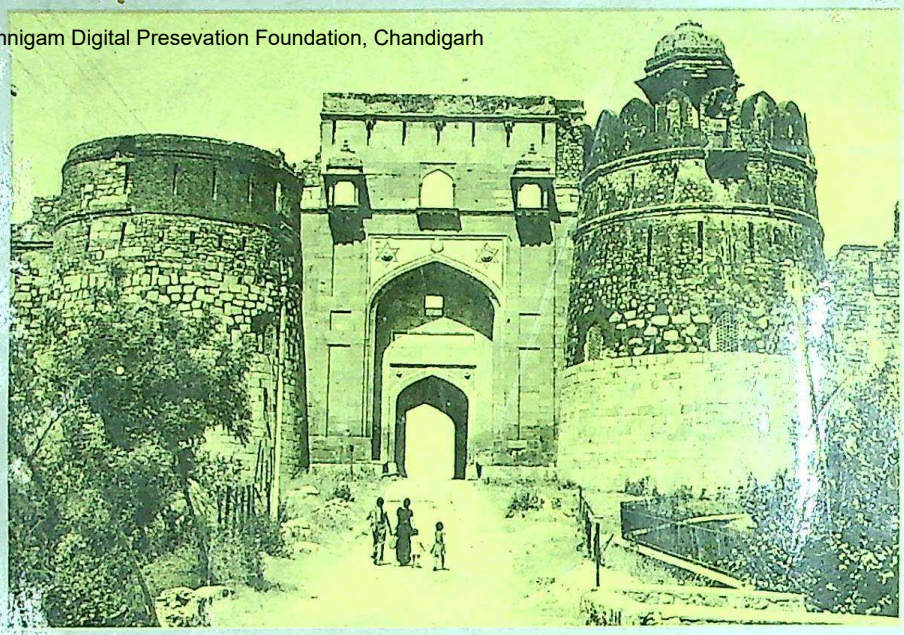
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